THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1891.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

AGAIN rumours as to the date of the General Election are in the air. Nothing, of course, can be said definitely, for even Ministers themselves are in the dark as to the precise day when they will at last accept battle. But this is certain—that few people now talk of Parliament as likely to run its full course. The Tory wire-pullers in the country are preparing for an appeal to the nation in the autumn. Some people believe that the dissolution may come still earlier, whilst a certain number are inclined to the opinion that Easter, 1892, will see the arrival of the fateful moment. It is curious to observe the temper in which the Ministerialists are making ready for the fight. There is hardly a man among them who, in private conversation, is not prepared frankly to acknowledge that the Opposition will "sweep the country." Why there should be this feeling of absolute certainty on the part of the Tories as to their own impending defeat it is difficult to say. Their opponents are wisely refraining from any exhibition of a like confidence in their own success. They believe in it as a matter of course, but they are resolved to fight for the victory as stoutly as though there were no odds in their favour and everything depended upon the manner in which the battle was fought in each particular constituency. This is the temper which ensures success, even when circumstances are far less favourable than they are at present to the Liberal cause.

PROBABLY the excessive anxiety of the Tories to get their labour programme or programmes before the country, has deepened the conviction that the General Election will not be long delayed. SIR JOHN GORST has taken MR. STEAD into his confidence, and given his version of the measures which Parliament ought to undertake to satisfy the aspirations of working men. It stops short at commissions of inquiry into the more difficult and important problems with which we have to deal; so that SIR JOHN does not, after all, throw much light upon the real attitude of the Tories towards labour. But that, for the present, they are resolutely bent upon "dishing the Liberals," if they can effect that process by means of "programmes," abstract resolutions, and flowery speeches, is certain.

THE Liberal programme has not been placed officially before the country. Why should it be at the present moment? It is better that the Opposition should devote itself to the advocacy of special reforms, which may be carried even during the brief remaining life of the present Parliament. Besides, if the reforms are not carried, Parliamentary discussion will at least tend to show who are and who are not the friends of reform, and what is the value of the "programmes" which are now so thick in the air. On Tuesday, as we have pointed out elsewhere, this test was applied to Tory-Unionist zeal on behalf of Constitutional reform with a remarkable result. By-and-by we shall know whether the present Ministers are prepared to raise the age of work for children under the Factory Acts to twelve—a measure which is certain to be carried by the Liberal party whenever it comes into office. Whilst we are able to arrive at an exact estimate of the composition of the reformers and the anti-reformers in Parliament by means of debates and divisions on specific questions, it seems rather like a waste of strength to talk about rival programmes. Yet in due time the Liberal programme will be in the hands of the electors, and will not be found wanting in strength or in practical character, despite the sneers of that practised maker of programmes, MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

IT is curious to note that in Thursday morning's *Times* there were printed at full length two speeches each dealing with the Labour question. One was by LORD SALISBURY and the other by MR. PARNELL. It appears that the Member for Cork can still curb the passionate hatred of England which has burst forth in all his recent speeches in Ireland, when he has to address an English audience. On Wednesday, speaking at Clerkenwell, he boldly came forward as an advocate of the cause of the English working man. The English working man, we imagine, will require some kind of security from a politician whose promises are not at present worth quite so much as Bank of England notes in the open market. Perhaps, too, MR. DAVITT could tell us something about MR. PARNELL'S views on the Labour question down to the moment when he was convicted in the Divorce Court. LORD SALISBURY'S speech, which was addressed to the Associated Chambers of Commerce, touched upon those grave tariff difficulties which we have discussed elsewhere, and upon the Labour questions which are exciting so much interest at home. He is for "full and exhaustive discussion and inquiry"—like everybody else; but has nothing beyond vague expressions of mingled hopes and fears and sympathetic regrets to offer to the working man.

A VACANCY has occurred in the Aston division of Birmingham, a constituency which has been represented in the present Parliament by a Conservative, MR. GEORGE KYNOCH. The death of MR. KYNOCH, who for some years past has persistently neglected his Parliamentary duties, gives the electors a chance of recording their opinions on the existing order of things. In 1886, MR. H. G. REID, who had represented the constituency in 1885, was defeated owing to the zeal with which MR. CHAMBERLAIN and his followers espoused the Tory cause. In the present contest the Liberal party will be represented by MR. PHIPSON BEALE, Q.C., whilst CAPTAIN GRICE HUTCHINSON will be the Unionist candidate. There could hardly be a fairer test of strength than that which the election will offer, for both candidates have local influence, both are men of ability, and both are ardent in support of their own cause. If the contest were to be fought anywhere but in the Birmingham district, the result would be a foregone conclusion. "As in 1885" would be the rule here as elsewhere. But we have still to reckon in Birmingham with the influence of MR. CHAMBERLAIN, akin in its character to that of MR. ROEBUCK at Sheffield, and it is at this moment an unknown quantity. Special interest attaches therefore to the contest.

THE *Times* of yesterday published a statement purporting to give the outcome of the South African negotiations, as they have been carried on between MR. CECIL RHODES, SIR HENRY LOCH, and the English Government. The first "outcome" seems to be a negative one. Nothing has been done to satisfy or even to conciliate Portugal, and MR. RHODES, we are told,

awaits with equanimity the lapse of the *modus vivendi* which is at present in force. This will entitle Portugal on her part to refuse any right of way to the territory of the Chartered Company through her possessions, and the result of such a step must be a bitter struggle between the Company and the Portuguese Government. In course of time a railway will be constructed by the Company to the East Coast. MR. H. H. JOHNSTON will have jurisdiction over the whole British sphere between the Zambesi and the German sphere; and MR. RHODES himself will be looked to as virtual Governor of the Company's territories, the Governor of the Cape retaining supreme control as High Commissioner. There is no doubt that the arrangements come to during the recent conferences at the Colonial Office will be satisfactory to the English Colonists; but it remains to be seen in what light they will be viewed by Portugal. A fresh explosion of patriotic anger in that country may have very serious and far-reaching consequences. It is, however, satisfactory to know that the Imperial interests of this country are safe-guarded under the new arrangement.

AMERICA has done herself justice at last, and Congress has formally recognised the right of the author who does not happen to be a citizen of the United States, to retain his property in his own work. We are told that the Copyright Bill is not "an ideal one." It is, in fact, as far from being ideal in its excellence as it well could be. But that matters little. The great principle for which English authors have been struggling through so many years, has at last been acknowledged, and honesty—even towards the humble novelist or poet—has been adopted as the policy of the great Republic. Most heartily do we congratulate the Americans upon this fact. That their consciences should at last have been touched by the cry of the English author, robbed of his offspring; and that they should finally have made up their minds to "put their foot down" on the pretensions of "pirate" publishers and Western "free traders" —in other people's goods—says much for the real grit of the national character, and the determination of the leaders of the country to keep the Republic in every respect abreast of the great States of Europe.

A VERY interesting question which is raised by the passing of the Copyright Bill is the practical effect which it is likely to have upon the English printing and publishing trades. The Bill provides that, in order to secure copyright, a book must be "manufactured"—that is, set up in type and printed —in the United States. At present there is no such restriction on the obtaining of copyright in this country. Consequently, many publishers fear that, unless we adopt a provision similar to the American one, the printing of books will pass almost absolutely away from this country to the other side of the Atlantic—to the serious detriment of the printing and publishing trades. We look upon this fear as altogether unfounded. In the first place, not one book in twenty published in England is likely to have any considerable sale in the United States; and in the next place a book the copyright of which is likely to be of value in both countries will, in almost every case, be worth manufacturing in both. There are many practical objections to the exclusive setting-up of books by English authors in America—such as the difficulties connected with the correction of proofs—which strengthen our belief that this objectionable feature of the American Bill will by no means have the serious consequences which some expect to flow from it.

MONDAY last was a great day in the history of the Wesleyan Methodists, as it was the occasion of a demonstration of their loyalty to the memory of their illustrious founder, the hundredth anniversary of whose death it was. The growth of Methodism, both during the life of JOHN WESLEY and afterwards, is touched upon elsewhere. It is one of those phenomena of our national life during the past century upon which men of all creeds can look with unalloyed satisfaction. Whatever may have been the drawbacks in the tenets of the sect, in its organisation and in its methods of work, the broad fact remains that it has been a power which has made for righteousness consistently throughout its history. That it is one of the powers of this world to-day is sufficiently obvious. Whether its hold upon the masses will be maintained against the rivalry of movements which have sprung from itself may be open to dispute; but there can be no difference of opinion as to the stability of its influence over the minds of that great middle class to whom WESLEY appealed, and in whom he implanted the seeds of spiritual fervour.

THE Directors of the Bank of England on Thursday made no change in their rate of discount. At the beginning of the week money in the outside market was very scarce and dear, and the rate of discount rose to very nearly 3 per cent.; but on Wednesday there was somewhat of a decline. Apparently the Directors hope that the foreign demand for gold is falling off. It is believed that for the present, at all events, the Russian Government will not take any more. On Friday and Monday it took about £700,000. It has still a very large balance in London, but for some time to come it is not thought probable that it will draw upon that. The German demand is expected to be satisfied by the shipments from New York. But the immediate course of the market will be regulated chiefly by the course of events in London. There is a very apprehensive feeling, as we point out elsewhere, regarding more particularly houses connected with South America. If there should be any serious failure, or even if the existing distrust should increase, the rates of interest and discount may advance sharply. On the other hand, if there be no untoward accidents, money is likely to become cheaper in a week or two. It can hardly, however, become very cheap if, as is thought probable now, the joint-stock banks so far accept the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to publish monthly accounts and to increase the reserves which they keep. That would lessen the supply of loanable capital and maintain rates higher than they otherwise would be. The price of silver has not fluctuated so much this week as for some time past. It is now 44⅞d. per oz., but there has been a sharp fall in silver securities, more particularly Indian Rupee paper, the market being disturbed by reported forgeries.

THE Stock Markets have been very flat all through the week, and business has been almost entirely suspended. The fears entertained of serious financial difficulties are, no doubt, much exaggerated; but there is sufficient foundation for them to deter operators from increasing their risks. At the same time the news from South America is very discouraging. The crisis in the Argentine Republic is going from bad to worse; the civil war in Chili is likely to continue for a considerable time; and there is no improvement in the state of affairs in Brazil. The excitement in Paris caused by the visit of the EMPRESS FREDERICK has also somewhat disturbed markets, as it shows how easily the peace of Europe might be disturbed; and, over and above all this, the fear that the banks generally may call in loans in order to increase their reserves is leading to an apprehension that the money market may be dearer than appeared probable lately. There have also been reports of financial difficulties in South Africa. Lately speculators have turned away from the other markets, believing that the time was approaching for a larger business in gold shares, but the reports of failures have caused a fall. Altogether the markets are more stagnant than they have been for a very long time past.

CLEARING THE DECKS.

BOTH political parties are now "clearing their decks" for the general action which every day draws nearer. The debate on Tuesday on Mr. Stansfeld's resolution and the amendment of Mr. Howorth has done something to define the attitude of both parties. It makes it evident that there will be no great difference in the professions made by Liberals and Tories when they stand face to face with the country. The business of the electors will be to determine how far the professions on either side are sincere, and to give their support to those who convince them that they really mean what they say. The debate on One Man One Vote ought to satisfy everybody upon one point at all events. The Liberals are manifestly anxious to get to the practical reform of our electoral system at the earliest possible moment, whilst their opponents, with Mr. Chamberlain at their head, are equally resolute in their determination to stave off reform as long as possible. This, at all events, is the evident purpose of Mr. Howorth's clumsy amendment to Mr. Stansfeld's motion. The member for Halifax has a distinct proposal to make. It is one the justice of which hardly anyone pretends to deny. It is also one which, if Parliament is so minded, may be brought into effect almost immediately—that is to say, before the General Election. Ministers dare not meet the proposal with a direct negative, so they put up Mr. Howorth to urge that nothing should be done until a scheme much greater in its character, and full of special difficulties, is also ripe for consideration. The half-loaf is to be refused because the whole loaf is not yet ready for us. That is the plain English of Mr. Howorth's proposal, and it is instructive to observe that in this policy of obstructing an immediate and practical reform, the unofficial representative of the Tory party had the support of no inconsiderable portion of the Liberal Unionist party.

Of the merits of Mr. Stansfeld's proposal it is hardly necessary to speak here. The abuse of plurality of votes has only been tolerated down to the present moment because it is one of those anachronisms in our free constitution to which we have become accustomed in course of time. The absurdity of allowing A to vote in a dozen different constituencies, whilst B, C, and the rest of the alphabet are only permitted to vote in one, is too obvious to need demonstration. As for the length of residence needed to qualify a voter, and the hideous jumble of the registration system, we have only to appeal to the authorities, to whatever party they may belong, in order to establish the case for reform. Here, then, was a plain issue set before the House of Commons. It was asked to undertake a most necessary work of reform which it could easily accomplish during the present session. Hardly a man on the Ministerial side of the House dared to object to that reform on its merits; the country is known to be practically unanimous in its favour. But it was rejected all the same—and why? Because an ingenious supporter of the Ministry was able to trail a red herring across the track, and to give his friends the opportunity of defeating Mr. Stansfeld's proposal without appearing to oppose it. We leave it to the electors to say whether Liberal or Conservative proved himself on Tuesday to be the better friend of the cause which each professed to advocate. For our part we should be glad to see the first of Mr. Stansfeld's proposals simplified in one direction. "One man one vote" ought to mean manhood suffrage, pure and simple. For such a measure of reform the nation is now ripe, and perhaps if Mr. Stansfeld had taken this high ground, even Mr. Howorth would have found it impossible to devise any means for evading the issue submitted to Parliament. But even as it is we have learned once more the real meaning of Tory professions in favour of reform. The measure which none dare kick to death may yet be stifled in the embrace of a simulated affection.

It will be well if the lesson taught on Tuesday be not repeated in regard to many other matters—notably the social reforms of which we now hear so much. There is, for example, the Royal Commission on the hours of labour. We are prepared to welcome that Commission if we can only be assured that it has been proposed in good faith. But in how many cases has a Royal Commission proved to be the grave of the movement committed to it! In the present case it is at all events obvious that the new Commission has been hailed with quite as much delight by the enemies of social reform as by its friends. Let us know what the composition of the Commission is to be, what are to be the terms of the questions referred to it, and then we shall be in a better position than we can pretend to be in at present to decide as to the good faith of its authors. But meanwhile Ministers can make their appeal to the country in their new character as the "friends of labour," and unless the electors exercise a little prudence and hold back until they know exactly what it is that the Government mean to do, they may be caught in a trap hardly better baited than that laid by the ingenious Mr. Howorth on Tuesday evening. For the present it is clear that the Government mean to push forward the "dishing process" with great vigour, in view of the approaching election. Of course, if the dishing were anything but illusory, the ardent advocates of certain social reforms might be induced to accept the Ministerial proposals without caring for the quarter from which they came. But—

> "Honey from silk-worms who can gather,
> Or silk from the yellow bee?"

Who is there who really believes that the leaders of the present coalition, men like Lord Salisbury and Lord Hartington, have the slightest intention of taking steps which must lead in the end to something in the nature of a social revolution, and which must in any case destroy that system of privilege so dear to the Tory heart? By all means let ardent reformers hear what Tory advocates of reforms—social and political—have to say, but let them at least look the gift-horse of a Tory programme in the teeth. We were taught on Tuesday evening how hypocritical are the professions of a desire for electoral equality on the part of Ministers and their friends. It is more than probable that when their social proposals are laid before us, we shall find, upon a critical examination, that their one purpose is to trick us with illusory hopes, and measures, the real object of which is to frustrate the very reforms they profess to foster.

GRAPES FROM THORNS.

PRINCE BISMARCK has his opportunity at last. He can point the finger of scorn at the diplomacy of his supplanter. Hitherto there has not been much reason in the growls from Friderichsruhe. Since the old Chancellor's effacement Germany has pursued her way without suffering any check. The Anglo-German Agreement showed that General von Caprivi could handle Lord Salisbury quite as adroitly as his predecessor. Europe has never had a moment's uneasiness in consequence of Prince Bismarck's fall. All the criticisms in the Hamburg journal through which the discarded statesman has irritated his Imperial master, have been as idle as if they had

proceeded from some irresponsible scribbler. Alike in foreign and domestic affairs, the Emperor and his adviser have shown tact and moderation. But now comes the first error—not one of those irretrievable steps which lead to grave national embarrassment, but a miscalculation, a piece of mistaken, though generous, sentiment. It is easy to see the use which Prince Bismarck can make of this. The man of blood and iron never made a concession to sentiment, and he will argue that the policy which sent the Empress Frederick to Paris exposed Germany to a rebuff from an inveterate enemy. Had his dynasty remained in power this would never have happened. He would not have attempted to gather German grapes from French thorns. He would have seen that any effort to conciliate France must be as futile as the abrogation of the Anti-Socialist law. All this Prince Bismarck can say with a good deal of force, and the one danger of the situation is that such criticism may exasperate the Emperor to take some measure even more provocative than the rigid enforcement of the passport regulations in Alsace-Lorraine. Both dignity and sound policy point to very different action. After all, there has been no dispute between the two Governments. The susceptibilities of the Empress Frederick have been so little ruffled by her reception in Paris that she has actually thanked the Parisians for their courtesy. If any people have come out of this business with loss of credit, they are the artists who first accepted the invitation to send their works to the Berlin Exhibition, and then changed their minds. They have exercised a feminine privilege in deference to patriotic pressure, and sensible Germans may reflect with satisfaction that if the Kaiser was prompted by an ill-judged sentiment, it was at least a worthier feeling than that which has baulked him.

A foolish attempt is being made in some quarters to show that the failure of the Emperor William's good intentions is due to his arrogant self-will. The world at large has every reason to be grateful to him for setting the example of a chivalrous spirit. It was not entirely irrational to suppose that French art would separate itself from national prejudices for the sake of vindicating its superiority in Europe. If all Germans had been animated by the sentiments of the *Cologne Gazette*, it might have been objected that to invite French painters to wear their laurels in Berlin was to slight the Fatherland. M. Detaille and his colleagues had the opportunity of enjoying a signal triumph, which was offered to them personally by the most distinguished member of the Emperor's family. No act of courtesy could have been better conceived. But if there is any truth in the gossip which comes from Paris, the failure of the Empress Frederick's mission was caused by social jealousies, by small blunders in *finesse*, by a hundred things which had nothing whatever to do with M. Déroulède's patriotic outpourings. The German Embassy was maladroit, and a most delicate piece of diplomacy was ruined by bungling. To this Prince Bismarck would probably reply that it is no business of German representatives in Paris to dance attendance on the foibles of French artists, or to discover whose old furniture the Emperor's mother might be taken to see without mortally offending a rival connoisseur. Walking on egg-shells was evidently an easy achievement compared with the task of guiding the Empress Frederick through the labyrinth of French susceptibilities. But the simplicity and goodwill which she manifested throughout this difficult experience might have disarmed the most embittered prejudice. The French would have sacrificed nothing if they had accepted this advance precisely in the spirit in which it was made, instead of regarding it as an attempt to seduce their artists from their devotion to Alsace and Lorraine. If the memories of Waterloo were as venomous as those of St. Cloud we might never see a French work of art in London.

It is some satisfaction that this episode has done comparatively little mischief. The feeling in Paris has calmed down, and the railings of the Chauvinist section of the German press have found no echoes. The Emperor William will show a commendable self-restraint by relaxing the irksome regulations in Alsace and Lorraine, which, rightly or wrongly, are regarded as a policy of reprisal. He can afford to be magnanimous, though his misconception of French sentiment is a notable illustration of the vanity of human wishes. The lustre of his reign will not be dimmed in history because he offered an olive branch which was rejected. But this singular transaction may have some discouragement for the optimists who look forward to the establishment of universal arbitration and the extinction of national hatreds. From the seeds of war spring the inexorable crops of dragons' teeth, and the grain of a happier spirit falls amongst thorns and is choked. Who can so water the soil that the produce shall fill the garners of peace?

HOW HAS CANADA GONE?

WE fully realise, and heartily sympathise with, the indignation which has been expressed by the Liberals of Canada in regard to the moment chosen by Sir John Macdonald for the Canadian elections. He has trampled on the feelings and disregarded the interests of everyone, including those English journalists whose lucubrations are published on the Saturday. Writing as we do at the moment when the Canadian electors are struggling through the snow to the polling-booths, we are weighed down by the knowledge that whatever we may venture in the shape of prophecy will fall under the coldly critical eye of readers who have learnt the result from their daily paper. But working even under these disheartening conditions, we refuse to take refuge in the easy expedient of saying ditto to the man in the street or in the club window, who airily disposes of the problem by assuring his hearers that "The Old Man will simply waltz in." Will he? We shall see. He has much in his favour. In the first place we must remember who the Canadians are, and why they are where they are. Leaving the floating element of immigrants out of count, the Canadian people are either French clericals, clinging frantically to old custom and ecclesiastical privilege, which the British connection alone seems capable of safeguarding; or they are the descendants of whatever was Tory and monarchical in feeling throughout English America—of men who forsook home and business rather than doff the hat to the ensign of Republicanism. And the monarchical bias of the Canadian mind, be it remembered, is perpetually maintained in vigour by that purging process which has driven a million of Canadians to seek the larger and fuller life of a Republic. Canada is the country of survivals. It is the Ulster of North America. That it has voluntarily made overtures for a closer union with the States is as improbable as if Ulster, having once received an autonomy of its own, were to apply for representation in the Parliament of College Green. And then the omens are propitious for Sir John Macdonald. Sir Richard Cartwright is in a position which strikingly resembles that of Mr. Gladstone in 1886. He has "rushed" the Canadian mind with an idea for which, as far as can be judged, it was

not prepared. The Thanes are deserting him. The luck in small things is against him. The snowstorm of the present week was not less disastrous for him than the various hurricanes by which Providence has, from time to time, during the last three centuries, driven off invaders from these sacred shores. Sir Richard Cartwright's hope was in the farmers, and the snow has not only cut short their political education a week before the proper time, but it must have been in great measure an absolute bar to their giving effective expression to so much of the Liberal creed as they have been able to assimilate. On the other hand, there are considerations which should prepare our minds for what may be a sad awakening to the men in the street and the club window. Business is business. However America may amend the McKinley Tariff for the convenience of those who consume European manufactures, it will maintain it as it is so far as it damages Canada. If Mr. Van Horne, of the Canadian Pacific, has thrown his weight into the Conservative scale, it is not to be forgotten that Mr. Sargeant, of the Grand Trunk, has entered his passionate protest against any words or policy which might precipitate the disaster of a Yankee boycott against Canadian traffic. The Canadians are not so well off as they were, and hardly any, save professional politicians, fail to ascribe their decrease of prosperity to "the National Policy." Many who have approved that policy up to the present as consolidating the national life, think that it has had its day. From a commercial and financial point of view, Sir John Macdonald gave away half his case when he adopted the plank of limited reciprocity. And the other half went when the Americans made it known that no proposals for limited reciprocity would now be entertained. There is nothing left in all his programme but the one sentence—"A British subject I was born, and a British subject I will die." If he is saved, it is those words which will save him. Then, again, the long-continued, flagrant and cynical corruption of Canadian politics cannot fail of their effect upon the Canadian electorate. Bribery is politically fruitful only so long as the bribe is in process of disbursement. No man, who has received his bribe, cares to see the process repeated for the benefit of his neighbour. Sir John Macdonald has borrowed over one hundred million dollars for public works, and spent them with a strict regard to his own electoral advantage; but it does not follow that those on whom they have been spent will in their gratitude ruin themselves to keep him in office. On the top of his long record of electoral corruption comes his latest achievement of "letter-stealing," as Sir Richard Cartwright frankly describes it. That policy may have increased the feeling in his favour over here; but amongst Canadians, who appreciated exactly how far the avowed Liberals of Canada were or were not in favour of North American unity, his theatrical revelation of Mr. Edward Farrer's veiled treason has had no real effect.

If Sir John Macdonald has been successful at the polls, it will not be the end of the matter. It will merely stir the United States into a more active policy of "pressure." At all points of contact, on sea and on land, the Yankee will show himself a bad and an unfeeling neighbour. Passion will be gradually aroused on each side. The Canadian Tories will undoubtedly appeal to the Mother Country for commercial union. To that appeal we opine that business England has but one answer to make—a *non possumus;* and in that event, the Canadian Tories themselves may assume an attitude towards the Imperial connection more outspoken than anything which we have yet heard from their responsible rivals.

On the other hand, if Sir John Macdonald has been judged adversely by the Canadian people, we should prepare ourselves for consequences which will go far beyond the mere adoption of a uniform tariff. Unity of tariff involves unity of regulations, a unification of Customs service, and, finally, a central control both for legislation and administration. An alliance in Customs matters will prompt to a postal alliance, to a monetary alliance, to an alliance in the great work of hunting down crime. Once the Customs barrier is broken through, it is difficult to see where the process of unification can stop; or how the two halves of a unified community can agree to differ on the fundamental, although sentimental, question of Monarchy *versus* Republicanism. Whichever way the cat has jumped, we do not regard the present circumstances as favouring a continued stability of British dominion on the American Continent. Our best hope is that the drawing nearer of Canada to the United States might draw us closer to the latter, and lead the way to that larger federation of the English-speaking races, which is, after all, the only rational interpretation of the Brummagem "Federation" advocated in the noisy and nauseating orations of such politicians as Mr. Howard Vincent, C.B., M.P., and his respected friend "Mr. Faithfull Begg," whoever the latter may be.

BACK TO PROTECTION?

A VERY melancholy little document is the first report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the approaching expiry of various European Commercial Treaties. Its purport must long ago have been anticipated; but none the less it seems to sound the knell of European Free Trade, as Cobden initiated it, with every hope and prospect of its extension, in 1860. On the face of it, France, which seems determined to lead the down-grade movement to Protection, as thirty years ago she was induced to head the march up to perfect freedom of commerce, has done nothing more than she has been threatening to do. She will not break a commercial treaty with us, for the simple reason that she has no such instrument. Since 1882 we have only had a navigation treaty with her. But we were not conspicuously worse off than we were before, owing to the acceptance by Belgium and Switzerland of the commercial treaty which Sir Charles Dilke did not think it worth our while to accept. Our own tariff has been assimilated to the Belgian and Swiss rates by the operation of the French "Law" of February 28th, 1882, which accorded to us, though not to our colonial produce, "the most favoured nation treatment." Now this advantage we are not likely to lose. We are still, *pace* Mr. Howard Vincent, a free-trading country, and our open ports will always admit French goods at tariffs lower than those of any European Power. What is going to happen, however, is something quite as serious. The Belgian and Swiss treaties expire on the 1st of February, 1892. France will not renew them. Her Government, pressed by the agricultural and manufacturing interests which were all but too strong for Napoleon and Rouher in 1860, will declare that she has had enough of commercial treaties. She will retain "the most favoured nation" system for general purposes, to which Germany bound her afresh in the Treaty of Frankfort. But she will revise her tariff in a wholly protectionist sense. She will henceforth have two scales of tariff—one the bad old general tariff considerably raised, then a so-called minimum tariff, which will be the general tariff in another dress—that is to say, will increase the duties on certain specified classes of goods by an average of twenty-four per cent. This will be

the rate of increase on our cotton yarns and tissues, and on woollen fabrics—the special subjects of negotiation between Cobden and the Emperor. On processes and articles which partake less of the nature of raw material, the increase of duty will be still larger. No wonder that Mr. Mundella's Committee characterise the act as one of "hostility" to our trade, and as an incitement to Europe to enter on a new commercial war.

That is, unfortunately, precisely what it means; and the direct invitation to a campaign of tariffs is in no way qualified by the fact that the governing rule of European trade will still be the "most favoured nation" treatment. This ingenious plan was very justly called the "sheet-anchor of Free Trade." The anchor, however, only holds when the tide is running in the Free Trade direction. Its effect was admirable when France accepted it as a maxim of international bargaining, and when we at a stroke opened our ports and hers, not simply to the two nations concerned, but to an informal European Zollverein, which has never been absolutely dissolved, and each member of which has benefited by each successive lowering of the level of Protective duties. Unhappily the process is now being reversed. The wall is not being lowered, but raised. The great Free Trade gun is turned against us. France increases the severity of the treatment she awards to her "most-favoured" commercial ally. Each member of the old Zollverein will follow her example. The new minimum tariff, which will virtually exclude a proportion of our goods, will become the lower-water level of a perpetually rising flood of Protection, which will envelop every European nation but our own. France has definitely committed herself to the taxation of raw material, and she will be driven to buttress an essentially false position by giving "drawbacks" on exports to her manufacturers. It is still more melancholy to think that the weakness of her Government in yielding to the Protectionist outcry will be enforced by the Customs Committee of the Chamber, which has already enhanced some of the duties fixed in the "Projet de Loi." It was the Chamber of 1860 which, had Napoleon been persuaded to consult it, would have smashed Cobden's treaty. To-day, apparently, it is as much dominated by the iron and silk and cotton industries as ever, and we may confidently count on it to wipe out thirty years of commercial progress, and to cancel the one good deed which, thanks to the deft genius of a great Englishman, history associates with the name of the Third Napoleon. We, of course, shall not change. We are too well grounded in the A B C of sound economic doctrine to join in any insane act of retaliation. That, much more than the policy of "remonstrance"—which Lord Salisbury last Wednesday covered with cheap scorn—deserves to be dubbed the politics of the nursery, for it is the first fatuous impulse of nations in their economic childhood. We have simply to wait till Europe swings back again into the Free Trade cycle, which she will leave to her own exceeding hurt.

THE LONDON WATER QUESTION.

NOW that Mr. Causton's Bill has been read a second time we may take it for granted that the House of Commons "means business" in the matter of the charges of the London Water Companies. It is true that the Bill has merely been allowed to pass its second reading in order to be referred to the Select Committee on the London Water Supply, and it runs a grave risk of being swamped by the greater question. But the matter of charge is urgent, and Mr. Ritchie sees, with perfect clearness, the political danger of delay. The position of the London householder in this matter is, indeed, nothing less than a public scandal. In April next the new valuation of the Metropolis will come into force, and the total rateable value will jump from thirty to at least thirty-one and a half millions sterling. If no change in the law is made, the eight London Water Companies will send in their next bills swollen by about 4 per cent. on this increase without distributing a pint more water than before. The extra income of about £50,000 per annum will be a clear addition to the net profits of the shareholders, who expect next year to be bought out at between twenty and thirty years' purchase. On the 1st of April next—an appropriate day for Londoners—the amount for which they are virtually held to ransom will rise by at least a million sterling. This is the charming *poisson d'Avril* which the framers of the Valuation (Metropolis) Act unconsciously prepared for us. It must be remembered that the increase in the valuation on the quinquennial revision does not represent new houses or rebuilding. The new premises occupied during about nine-tenths of the quinquennial period have already come into rating in the periodical supplementary valuation lists. On all these points of new supply, representing about £400,000 a year of annual value, the Water Companies have already been allowed to levy their rates. The quinquennial rise is almost entirely due either to sheer "unearned increment" of land values or increased accuracy of assessment. It is hard to discover why either of these causes should increase the aggregate price of London's water supply.

It is not as if the increased valuation formed a part of any bargain with the Water Companies. These were established, the oldest nearly three centuries ago, the youngest a whole generation ago, long before the Act of 1869 provided for an effective periodical revision of the metropolitan valuation. That Act was passed with a view to the stricter enforcement of the Income Tax (Schedule A), and the more equitable partition of the aggregate burdens of London government. There was, it may safely be said, no thought and no intention of quinquennially increasing one of the most important of those burdens. Our water-rates now come to one-fifth of all the cost of London government and London poor-relief. In 1869 they were only a little over one-third of their present amount. During that time the annual rateable value of London has grown by over 16 millions sterling, of which at least 7 millions represents merely the automatic rise in value of London real estate. What this has meant to the water shareholders is shown by the growth in the market value of their stock. In 1871 their ten millions of expenditure were worth over fourteen millions, a premium of 44 per cent. In 1890 the fourteen and a half millions expended were worth thirty-three and a half millions, or a premium of 125 per cent. The unearned increment of London water shares has been even greater in proportion than the unearned increment of London land; and because the Water Companies have enjoyed the unexpected gain of annually charging rates on the latter unearned increment, we shall be called upon to pay for their mains at least seven millions sterling more than they could have asked had this fortuitous item been excluded.

This is the increased grip upon the London householder which Mr. Causton desires to stop for the future. His Bill would prevent the companies from ever exceeding the existing valuation on any house, unless, by rebuilding or otherwise, an

additional supply of water is required. So moderate is this demand that one of the eight companies has already intimated its willingness to accept it. So unreasonable would be its rejection that the Ministerial Whips warned their leaders not to divide upon it. Not even the strongest Metropolitan Conservative member cares to be held responsible for an increased water rate next Michaelmas in every house in his constituency. Parliament has, indeed, not scrupled in past years to revise the charges of the Water Companies. In 1885, as Lord Bramwell unkindly points out to the *Economist*, Mr. Torrens' Act forbade them to levy their statutory percentage upon the full annual value, and restricted them thenceforth to the "rateable value," an amount, as Lord Bramwell observes, "which was practically five-sixths only of the value. It was a downright confiscation, and therefore a precedent for another. It caused a loss to the Vauxhall Company of £9,000 a year."

But those who, like Lord Bramwell, still adhere to the "good old plan," and regard even accidental power to tax the public as an indefeasible title, are to-day few and far between. The Select Committee will have before them the fact that, as Sir W. Harcourt's Committee observed in 1880, "if the contention of the companies is well founded, the population of the Metropolis and its suburbs, amounting to four millions of people, would be left at the mercy of certain trading companies armed with the power of raising the price of one of the first necessities of life to an extent practically without any limit: a situation from which the companies seem to consider there is no escape, except in the purchase of their undertakings at such a price as they may be willing to accept." Are we, either in law or in equity, compelled to buy up this income-yielding right as if it were Consols?

Sir Thomas Farrer, in a weighty article in the current number of the *New Review*, concurs with Sir W. Harcourt in emphatically answering "No," and his readers can, we think, hardly fail to agree with him. The former Secretary of the Board of Trade shows how inevitable is the early construction of works for an entirely new supply; how the Lea is already giving out, and the Thames near exhaustion as a source of potable water; how the existing machinery of distribution and filtration is, in any case, defective; and how "aqueducts larger than Rome ever contemplated" must be undertaken for the city whose size and whose wealth Rome itself never approached. How, then, in the face of these new needs, can the Metropolis be asked to pay thirty-three millions sterling for the obsolete plant which has already yielded its owners such an excellent return for their outlay?

"But Parliament," continued Sir W. Harcourt's Committee, "is not unequal to redress such mischiefs to the public interests. The manner in which the gas companies have been dealt with by Parliament may be referred to in illustration of the methods by which a remedy for such a state of things may be effectually provided." For, be it always remembered, the eight London water companies do not possess, and have never possessed, any statutory monopoly of supply. As with the gas companies, in past years active competition existed between them, and even to-day two companies occasionally possess rival powers to supply the same area. Any landowner may, like the great breweries, seek his own supply from his own well. Any combination of persons may exercise a similar right. The St. Pancras Board of Guardians already supplies its workhouse in this way, at the expense of public funds and to the serious loss of the New River Company. The Metropolitan Board of Works, before its extinction, was seeking powers to provide an altogether new supply for the whole metropolis. Just as the recalcitrant gas companies were brought to terms by the threat of a competing scheme by the City Corporation, so must our "water lords" be dealt with by the London County Council. We must go to the companies with two simultaneous Bills, backed by the Ministry of the day. In the one hand, London must present an offer to purchase their plant and mains at a fair valuation as they now exist, without reference either to cost or to Stock Exchange share quotations. In the other hand Londoners must hold the right to seek for themselves a new supply of the prime necessity of urban life, and to provide for themselves the most improved methods of filtration and distribution. Negotiations on any other basis can hardly fail to lead to the deadlock of 1880, which proved fatal to Lord Beaconsfield's Administration. Any repetition of the financial proposals of that year may be trusted to produce to-day no less a storm among the six hundred thousand metropolitan electors.

THE ARGENTINE CRISIS.

THE alarm excited last week by the embarrassments of some of the great houses interested in the Argentine Republic abated for a day or two, but have again revived, although the greatest of them has received temporary assistance, and it is believed that measures are being taken for placing it upon a safe footing. There is no doubt that the embarrassments are very real and very serious. The houses had brought out too many Argentine issues of all kinds, and apparently had been obliged to take up a large proportion of the securities which the public refused to subscribe for. Some of them also guaranteed railway contractors and others, and in these and other ways incurred vast liabilities. But there appears to be equally no doubt that the assets are very large and very valuable. Those who have looked into the affairs of the principal houses talked about have satisfied themselves that, even if the Argentine securities held are valued very much below the present quotations, the assets exceed considerably the liabilities. But though they are unquestionably valuable they are not readily saleable. Some of them are of a character for which it is not easy to find purchasers. Others have depreciated in consequence of the crisis through which the City is passing. The result is that while the houses have very large and very valuable assets, they cannot sell them, and they cannot pledge them; so that a week or ten days ago it was feared that, whilst solvent, one of them would be unable to obtain ready cash to fulfil its engagements. Happily assistance has been given which has enabled it to get over its temporary embarrassment, and now arrangements, it is understood, are under consideration for converting the business into a Limited Liability Company. It is said that the share capital is to be a couple of millions sterling, and that there are to be debentures for between one and two millions, the latter representing, we presume, the assistance that has lately been afforded to the house. It remains to be seen whether it will be possible to place these debentures. Of course, there is a price at which they can be sold; though whether that price would be deemed sufficient is another matter. But whether the conversion takes place or not, there are good grounds for concluding that the assistance given has warded off the temporary difficulties, and that, therefore, no suspension is to be apprehended. Yet, though the fears entertained respecting this house

are now found to have been exaggerated, a very uneasy feeling still remains in the City. The names of other houses are again being made free with, and there is anxiety, if not actual apprehension. The explanation is to be found in the exceedingly unfavourable intelligence from the Argentine Republic.

The text of the Act for funding the interest on the debt, as well as the guarantees given to industrial companies, which passed the Argentine Congress at the beginning of January, reached this country at the end of last week, and were at once submitted to the legal advisers of the London Committee, together with the authority sent to Dr. Plaza. They were found satisfactory, and the agreement was signed on Thursday. It is also believed that the purchase by the Argentine Government of the Buenos Ayres Waterworks will be soon effected. A little while ago the negotiations were nearly broken off, there being a difference of about £800,000 between the Government and the company. The difference is now narrowed down to £300,000, and a compromise has become comparatively easy. The City hopes that if these two arrangements are made a better feeling will arise. We are not ourselves quite of that opinion. We have pointed out the objections we hold to the plan for funding the coupons and the guarantees, and we still more strongly object to the purchase of the waterworks. We concede fully that the Government cannot pay cash, and therefore that it must make some kind of compromise with its creditors. But we hold that the sterling bondholders ought to have priority over all other creditors, that the new debt to be created ought to rank even after the guarantees, and that the waterworks should rank still later.

But, without dwelling upon these matters now, we would point out that the difficulties of the Republic are too great to allow of an early improvement. All classes have been plunged into distress. The owners of lands and houses have borrowed within a few years about four hundred millions of dollars on mortgage of their properties, which, taken at par, would represent about eighty millions sterling; and it is to be recollected that the whole population is only about four millions. Interest and Sinking Fund upon this crushing debt range from about 7 per cent. to 9 per cent. It is not necessary to do more to show that there must be almost as universal insolvency amongst the house and land owners of the Argentine Republic, as there was in Ireland when the Encumbered Estates Court was created. Then, again, the banks are utterly insolvent. The Finance Minister himself has declared so in the most emphatic terms, and the foreign banks, which alone are well managed and have resources, are regarded by the Government as enemies. These banks have quite lately been subjected to a tax of 2 per cent. upon their deposits and 10 per cent. upon their profits. It need hardly be said that the banks will not pay these taxes out of their own funds; they will take very good care to make their customers bear the burden. The effect, therefore, of the new taxation is to make the rate of interest very much higher than it was already. In other words, in a time of panic the Government is making it more difficult than it necessarily must be for any man in business to get accommodation from the banks. Over and above all this, the fall in prices, the political alarm, and the shock to credit have utterly disorganised trade of every kind. Business is at a standstill and there is universal distrust. As a natural consequence the railways and other industrial concerns are finding their traffics falling off, and in every direction there is loss, if not actual distress.

The economic disorganisation is aggravated by political alarm. The present Government, it will be recollected, was raised to power last summer by an insurrection in Buenos Ayres. Great hopes were entertained of the new men; but unfortunately they have utterly disappointed them. The President himself, while promising in the most emphatic manner to abandon all the evil courses of his predecessor, is alleged to have given new guarantees. General Roca, the Minister of the Interior, is accused of manipulating the constituencies somewhat after the fashion that has brought about the civil war in Chili. And Dr. Lopez, the Finance Minister, has committed mistakes hardly less serious than those of his two predecessors. The result of all is a feeling of exasperation, and for months past there has been danger of another rising. Indeed the danger a couple of weeks ago became so great that a state of siege was proclaimed. To add to the gravity of the situation there is a very bad feeling between Buenos Ayres and the other Provinces. Much is hoped from General Mitre, who is on his way out from Europe. He may be able to control his own party and to prevent serious disturbance. But unquestionably the situation is very grave. And it is all the graver if, as appears, the Government is unable to pay its way. On Wednesday the President applied to the foreign banks for a loan of 20,000,000 dollars paper, and was refused. If this means that the banks will not trust him, it is a very grave matter. If it means that he will not accept their terms, preferring to issue more inconvertible paper, he is breaking his word to the London Committee, is depreciating still more the inconvertible paper, and thereby is aggravating both the economic crisis and the political danger. The political and economical condition of the Argentine Republic being such, there is little ground for hope that an improvement can come soon, and if it does not the embarrassments of the houses which hold too many Argentine securities, and which have committed themselves in the way of railway construction or the like, will only too probably be increased. At all events, the prospect that their affairs will grow better is not great.

ON GREEN BENCHES.

"THE best ball bowled this Session," was the comment of a Liberal leader on the debate on Mr. Provand's motion to increase the taxation of land. Needless to add, the bowler was the veteran whose all-round play extends over a trifle of fifty years. And a very snaky ball it was. The debate, as Mr. Provand started it, promised little more than a useful statement of undeniable fact concerning the Great Historic Shuffle under which the landlord has escaped all but the merest fraction of his share of public burdens. It was excellent, for instance, to recall Mr. Goschen's attempt twenty years ago to secure the division of the rate, and to quote, much to the Chancellor's discomfort, his famous comparison between the taxation of land abroad and in this country. Mr. Provand did real justice to these sides of his argument, but he is hardly an inspiring orator. Melancholy has marked him for its own; and there is a high Presbyterian note in his voice which served to mar the excellent quality of his speech. Mr. Gladstone, who had edged along the bench in his usual fashion of getting within ear-shot of below-the-gangway talkers, listened with a slightly relaxed air, which grew on him visibly under the influence of Mr. Stuart's oratory. Luckily for the Liberal leader and for the debate, Mr. Chaplin was for some unaccountable reason put up to answer Mr. Provand, though Mr. Goschen, blotting-pad in hand, was in his place, and, it is to be presumed, thoroughly equal to

the task of answering his own arguments. Mr. Chaplin's presence and speech possess a kind of irritant attraction for Mr. Gladstone. They have crossed swords and bludgeons more than once, with results—to Mr. Chaplin. In particular, the notion of the big Lincolnshire squire as an amateur Chancellor—not of the Duchy, but of the Exchequer—had its piquant side. So all at once Mr. Gladstone sat bolt upright; a very wide-awake old lion indeed. The next moment he had his pencil out, and a little later he had despatched an aide to the library for references. The speech which provoked these demonstrations was in truth an exquisitely foolish one, the orator's *naïve* pleasure in it prettily contrasting with the dismay legibly written on Mr. Goschen's prudent face. In the course of it, Mr. Chaplin admitted (1) that Protective duties enhanced the price of agricultural produce; (2) that the rural rates fell eventually on land—an abstract economic truth, subject of course to large deductions in the case of urban land; and (3) that the landlords were entitled to further relief. It was these little slips which set Mr. Gladstone "on the pounce." He treated the House to one of the most delightful bits of verbal fence which ever pleased its eye and ear, but, unfortunately for his opponent, he had taken the button off his foil. With sweeping courtesy—like all great *maîtres d'armes*, Mr. Gladstone is terribly courteous—he made Mr. Chaplin a "present of Mr. Henry George," out of whom the Chancellor *ad hoc* had woven a good deal of rather loose rhetoric. Having cleared the ground of battle he pressed home his first thrust. Here was an admission from an ex-Protectionist leader, that the aim of Protective duties was to benefit the landlords. For that end, then, Mr. Chaplin's party had fought—the noble end of self-interest. Poor Mr. Chaplin wriggled under this stroke, only to fall afresh on his opponent's keen and ready blade. Touching that point concerning rural rates. They fell on land, did they? That explained the six millions the Government had made over to county rates—a sheer "unadulterated gift" to the landlord, who, on the other hand, had only been taxed a few paltry hundred thousands under the succession duty, while, under Mr. Goschen's new estate duty, realty—as Mr. Provand showed earlier in the evening—had only borne 1 per cent. against 99 per cent. burden on personalty. And yet, according to Mr. Chaplin, as the spokesman of the Government which had made this gigantic gift to landlordism from the Consolidated Fund, the landlord was entitled to further relief! Nothing could stay the triumphant force of such a demonstration. It was a case of "*Touché*"—there—and there—and there! Mr. Goschen came to the rescue of his discomfited colleague, but Mr. Gladstone that night was invincible—a very D'Artagnan of thrust and parry. The service to his party was no less conspicuous than the brilliancy and pictorial beauty of the assault. Parties want heartening as well as men and women, and nothing could have been more useful than Mr. Gladstone's apt pricking of the bubble of Tory Democracy at the moment of its inflation.

The House of Commons is not, as a rule, remarkable for its devotion to pure ideas. It is not at all soul-ful or ideal-ful. But 'tis wonderful how strong the influence of the Counsel of Perfection becomes whenever a party is anxious to stop a reform which has only the moderate recommendation of practicality. It was curious to watch the process of idealisation over the "One Man One Vote" debate. The whole obstructive force of the House suddenly became fiercely *intransigeant*. Mr. Howorth forgot for the moment his usual part of Tory Cassandra, and became a pale enthusiast for equal electoral rights—especially for England at the expense of Ireland. Mr. Whitmore, who admirably represents the thinner kind of Oxford tradition of speech and temper, was keen for an Electorate of Mind—a fulfilment of John Stuart Mill's shadowy ideal. Mr. Courtney was more in his place as an advocate of a logically flawless franchise. Everybody remembers the day when the Chairman of Committees left the Treasury bench, where he had been doing such exemplary work, and stood bravely up from a corner seat below the gangway to deliver a speech, which nobody understood but himself, on the merits and mysteries of proportional representation. The House did not appreciate the worship of equations, and to-day Mr. Courtney's honest face suggests the shadow of a disappointment which has affected his whole political career, and is a grave warning against the pursuit of arithmetical passions.

No one, however, was astonished when Mr. Courtney wound up the debate on "One Man One Vote" with a vehement protest against such trivial amendments of a system radically vicious. But the chief convert to the ranks of the idealists was a man of a different stamp to Mr. Courtney. Nowadays Mr. Chamberlain rarely intervenes in debate; but he has lost none of his old strength—an acid force as against the more generous alkali of Mr. Gladstone's nature—none of his wonderful simplicity and directness of speech, nothing of his keen, steady thrust, his apt malice. His tone is even harder than it was, for the gracious gift of human sympathy, never very plenteously bestowed on Mr. Chamberlain, is now completely lost to him. His speech, too, beneath its surface cleverness, was full of the grossest inconsistencies. He refused to support a reform of registration, because that would loose a "flood of new voters" on the constituencies. He would not support "one man one vote," because it only took "a little from a few," and did not open the gates of the franchise to the million. But its main point was the latter. "You see in me," said Mr. Chamberlain, in effect, "the root and branch reformer. I am for equal electoral districts, manhood suffrage, payment of members. All these things are in *my* programme (held in reserve for the moment, while my friends opposite are doing my work). Meanwhile I decline to look at these trivialities." All this was dexterous enough, and the brilliant aside to Sir William Harcourt showed Mr. Chamberlain in his real character as one of the most artful of debaters. But somehow one knows the blade that is fitted for this kind of swordsmanship. It comes from—Birmingham.

Mr. T. H. Bolton is a politician who is bound to shine. In the early days of Home Rule, when Mr. Chamberlain was in a strait betwixt two, Mr. Bolton rose to be a power in Parliament. The times were critical, but Mr. Bolton, thanks to his relations with Prince's Gardens, was able from time to time to convey to alarmed journalists, with a reassuring arch of his eyebrows, the pleasant news that the State was safe. Unlike most heroes of revolution, however, Mr. Bolton has shown the safe virtue of modesty. He has left the paths of high politics for those of London business. And he has really done very well in them. Last Wednesday, for instance, he carried an excellent amendment of the leasehold laws in the teeth of much Tory opposition and against the solid vote of the Government.

CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

THE unfortunate visit of the Empress Frederick to Paris—some of the results of which are dealt with elsewhere—has thrown all other French and German news into the shade. Nevertheless, much has happened in both countries. The German Government has suddenly changed its Parliamentary attitude. In the Reichstag on Saturday, the Chancellor went out of his way to attack the Liberals and Social Democrats; and it seems generally admitted that he means to rely (like his predecessor) on the Cartell parties for support. Last week these latter were in the deepest depression; now they are jubilant at the thought that concessions to Liberalism are ended.

But—as the Liberal papers point out—the German Government cannot possibly depend for support on the Cartell alone. That party is not a majority of the Reichstag; to secure a majority, concessions must be made either to the Ultramontanes, which will disgust half the Cartell, or to the Liberals, which will estrange the whole. Of course, however, the immediate result must be the sacrifice of some of the items in the Ministerial programme. Possibly the labour reform laws may be modified, or the duty on Austrian wheat may not be lowered, or—more probably—we may see a vigorous colonial policy adapted to the taste of the readers of the *Cologne Gazette*.

In France, also, a good deal has happened, Since Thursday week the Senate has been engaged in discussing the administration of Algeria. The natives, it was alleged by M. Pauliat, are being gradually crowded out, either (like the North American Indians) by compulsory expropriation at an unfair price, or (like the Irish in the reign of Queen Elizabeth) by that substitution of individual for tribal property in which the rights of the inferior co-owners are generally ignored. The reply of M. Tirman, the Governor-General, dealt somewhat too much in generalities; and the Minister of the Interior, M. Constans, though he met some of M. Pauliat's charges satisfactorily, admitted the desirability of a commission of inquiry, which is therefore to be appointed.

The main outlines of the French Budget of 1892 have been published. The new Customs tariff will add about 38,000,000 francs to the revenue, which is to be applied in reducing, by nearly one-half, the tax on railway passengers and on fast goods traffic, which was fixed at its present amount after the war of 1870. From April 1, 1892, passenger fares will be reduced by (about) 9 per cent. in the first class, 18 per cent. in the second, and 27 per cent. in the third; while the rates for parcels, perishable goods, and cattle, will not be taxed at all—a fact which English fruit-growers will do well to note.

Other matters dealt with in the French Chambers this week are—the State grant to "communal colleges," secondary schools chiefly maintained by the towns, and many of them not well attended, but regarded as a bulwark against clericalism (which, it was stated, controls 45 per cent. of the pupils of secondary schools in France) and as a necessary means of defence of the Republic; agricultural distress—a motion to remit for this year the land-tax on wheat-fields, owing to the severe winter, having been referred to the Budget Committee; and gambling. The Ministry has declined to interfere with the gaming-tables at Monaco, but has brought in a Bill dealing with the surplus from the "pari-mutuel"—the pooling system usual at French race-meetings—which, by the way, was recommended some years ago by a high authority as a palliative for the evils of the English Turf. This measure quite unexpectedly raised so many protests against betting that the Bill has been rejected, the "pari-mutuel" discontinued (from to-morrow) by order of M. Constans, and the book-makers threatened with prosecution. But nobody seems to expect much practical result from this sudden outburst of virtue.

The Italian Ministry have made their first decided success with the Budget statement of Signor Luzzatti on Monday last. Signor Grimaldi, the last Minister of Finance, had stated the deficit at 38,000,000 francs, and had proposed to meet it by reductions of expenditure amounting to nine millions. Signor Luzzatti estimates that further reductions may be made amounting to 36,000,000 francs; so that the surplus would be seven millions, but for the fact that the receipts will be ten millions below Signor Grimaldi's estimate. The reform of banks of issue is estimated to produce four millions. Thus the deficit of three millions is met, and a million carried to the payment of debt. "Rearrangements" of the tax on gunpowder, of the Government lotteries, and of the salt and tobacco monopoly, and a reform of the pension system, will produce about five million francs besides, and more by-and-by. Thus six—and eventually ten—millions will be applicable to the payment of debt. The debts of the Treasury at the end of this year will amount to 480,000,000 francs.

Signori Zanardelli and Brin are doing their best to organise a regular Opposition from Signor Crispi's immediate following, and it is clear that they mean to carry on an active Parliamentary warfare against the Ministry. The *Gazzetta Piemontese*, the organ of the so-called "Piedmontese group," has declared against Signor Crispi, though whether in the interest of the Government or of Signor Zanardelli is not clear. At any rate, the latter is at present the active leader of the Opposition. On Wednesday the Premier declared that the Triple Alliance will be maintained unimpaired.

The elections in Austria, so far as they have gone, indicate that the anti-particularist and social reform policy which Count Taaffe foreshadowed when he dissolved the Reichsrath is not very likely to meet with adequate support. Everywhere the Extremists seem to be defeating the Moderates—most conspicuously in Bohemia, where the Young Czechs, the ultra-Nationalist and Home Rule Party which originally caused Count Taaffe's change of front, have won eleven seats already from the Old Czechs, the party of moderation and compromise with the Germans. In the last Reichsrath there were two Young Czechs: in this there will be thirty. In Lower Austria the German Liberals—who were to have been the nucleus of the new Ministerialist coalition—have lost four seats to the anti-Semites, and a similar fate probably awaits them in Vienna. There are, however, four groups, more or less mutually hostile, which profess this latter creed, and not one of them seem to have any definite view as to how to carry it into practice. Apparently the small traders feel that large capitals and large enterprises are crowding them out, and attribute all their sufferings to the Jews. Among the eighteen groups or thereabouts, each more or less opposed to all the rest, which will take the place of political parties in the new Reichsrath, there is plenty of scope for ingenious but unstable combinations—necessarily on the Bismarckian principle of *do ut des*.

The new Servian Ministry has sent a circular letter to its diplomatic representatives abroad, signifying its intention to develop the national resources, and to cultivate friendly relations with its neighbours. Anti-Austrian demonstrations at Belgrade indicate pretty clearly—as our correspondent's letter this week explains—which neighbour is particularly referred to.

The Spanish Cortes have been opened. A Protectionist policy, new commercial treaties, an amnesty for political offenders, and labour legislation, are announced in the Speech from the Throne.

The Norwegian crisis is about to be temporarily ended by the formation of a "*Cabinet d'affaires*" under M. Steen, which will simply carry on the government until the general elections. The matter which caused the defeat of the Ministry was an old grievance, which made itself felt as lately as 1889, when Norway was not properly represented at the opening of the Paris Exhibition, because the King of Sweden, with gross ingratitude, objected to commemorating the French Revolution, and the (Swedish) Foreign Minister of the two countries followed his wishes rather than those of the Norwegian Government; and the Norwegian Legislature can hardly be blamed if it seeks to obviate a recurrence of such incidents. As Unionist papers have been improving the occasion, it must be pointed out that Home Rulers do not propose that the Irish Parliament shall be co-ordinate with that of Great Britain. But Sweden and Norway are nominally co-ordinate nations under the same King; only in practice foreign affairs are always managed from Sweden—to which the Norwegians not unnaturally object.

We have only space to add that the Congress of the United States has passed the Immigration Bill, strengthening the provisions against pauper immigrants, the Copyright Bill, and a bill subsidising lines of mail steamers; that much is hoped from General Mitre's arrival at Buenos Ayres next Sunday week, but that the financial situation in Argentina is again very strained; and that the news from Chili is more conflicting than ever, but that the Government accounts are apparently the least true (to speak euphemistically). It is hoped, according to the *Times* correspondent at Lisbon, that after the impending elections some sort of compromise may be arrived at.

THE WESLEYAN CENTENARY.

METHODISM has this week been celebrating the centenary of its founder's death. It has cause for gratitude, and so has the English people. For much smaller mercies we have often enough had much greater rejoicings. It is, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says, "by far the most important phenomenon of the (eighteenth) century," or, as Mr. Lecky confesses, "the religious revolution" it accomplished is "in real importance" higher than "the career of the elder Pitt and the splendid victories by land and sea that were won during his Ministry." In romance and manifest religious results it far exceeds anything the followers of Francis of Assisi, or Dominic, or Ignatius Loyola, could show within a century of their founders' deaths. If such a thing could be decided by majorities, it is certain that, while episcopacy may be the Church of England, Methodism is the Church of the English race. For the younger is the vaster society; it has 39,408 ministers, 6,122,564 Class Members, and its adherents have been estimated at from 25,000,000 to 30,000,000. The figures are not mine, and would be incredible did we not remember that, apart from the Roman, the Methodist is the strongest Church in the United States, in numbers eight times stronger than the Anglican, and is in all our colonies active, aggressive, missionary. But statistics are here the least significant of things, good only as evidence of the real magnitude of the body and of the forces it has generated and, as it were, accumulated by expending. Wesley and Methodism are not to be measured by the method of the enumerator; the millions they have attracted are the least of their results. What may be termed their indirect achievements are much greater.

In the midst of our multitudinous religious activities, in the face of our religious temper and tendencies, we can hardly conceive what the eighteenth century was before and at the birth of Methodism. Deism was the fashion; the temper that met it was as rational as its own. The talk of the coffee-house and the *salon* justified Butler's complaint that it had come, he knew not how, to be taken for granted by many persons that Christianity was not so much as a subject of inquiry, but was at length discovered to be fictitious. A preacher to a clerical congress selected for his theme the being of God, on the ground that it was the only point on which he was sure all would agree. Religion was maintained because it was an economical yet efficient form of police. "Why," Free-thinker Collins was once asked, "are you so careful to make your servants go to church?" "I do it," he said, "that they may neither rob nor murder me." How the clergy of the day were esteemed, and what many of them were, Henry Fielding bears witness. In "Tom Jones" we see the kind of wife the parson was expected to marry, and the sort of fortune that was thought good enough for his daughter. The uniformity enforced by political passion produced religious indifference; it was more successful in expelling cultivated and convinced men from the pulpit than in finding preachers fit to follow them. And so neglect of the people lost the people. Society was politely, the people were coarsely, licentious, but it would be hard to say that the more brutal pleasures were more vicious than the refined. To this age Wesley came as prophet and reformer. He passed through many phases, but his passion which began as a mystic's ended as an apostle's. Men of ecclesiastical minds may discuss what sort of Churchman he was, and find comfort in quoting things he said with which they agree. But the great thing about Wesley was the work he did and his reason for doing it. He did his work—not by virtue of the Church doctrine he started with, but of the faith which came to him. He believed as Luther believed, in justification by faith, as Calvin believed, though he was no Calvinist, in the necessity and sufficiency of the grace of God, as the Moravians believed, in conversion and consecration of spirit, and by right of the faith he held and the goodly succession in which he stood he did the work of an apostle. The criticism of the day did not touch him; his apologetic was the fact and the experience of the living man. "Beat," he said to the critics, "on the sack of Anaxagoras. But you can no more hurt my evidence of Christianity than the giant could hurt the spirit of that wise man." "One thing I know: I was blind and now I see." He lived in the region of realities; neither literary nor social fashions touched or troubled him. Rousseau was to him a "coxcomb," and "a cynic all over;" and "his brother-infidel Voltaire" was the same. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "how hard it is to be shallow enough for a polite audience!" But to spend one's life in arguing for the truth of religion was but to waste time and engender doubt; evils were to be cured, men were to be saved; to do these things was the work of religion. And in his hands it did both. "Though I am always in haste," he said, "I am never in a hurry"; and he proved it by his labours. And never were labours more abundant or more fruitful. Wesley may be said to have found England full of unconquered heathenism, and to have left it, if not changed and Christian, yet active and alive to religion as it had not been for a century and a half—if, indeed, ever before. It is a small matter whether the work was done with or without episcopal sanction; the remarkable thing is, it was done, and done evidently with the sanction and by the blessing of God.

Of course, such work as his could not be done amid universal applause. The mob assailed him the press satirised him, the clergy harassed him, fortune and floods impeded him, calumny defamed him, but he went straight forward, possessed with as signal serenity of temper as capacity for work. Butler told him that he once thought he was a well-meaning man, but he had now found him out, and could think so no more. "Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelation and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing—a very horrid thing." To Warburton, he was an example of "the successful impostors which have set out in all the blaze of fanaticism," and "completed their schemes amidst the cool depths and stillness of politics." The comparison he suggested between Loyola and Wesley, Bishop Lavington worked out. But no man ever cared less for censure or criticism, wherever it came from; and though he was the most convinced of men, he was anything but the narrowest. He was more generous than the broadest of that latitudinarian day. "Orthodoxy or right opinion," he said, "is but a very slender part of religion, if any part at all." Conscience was to him "the Son of God in man," or "the Spirit of Christ," "the light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." Within his large charity Marcus Antoninus and the virtuous heathen, Loyola and the Roman Catholics, Thomas Firmin and the Socinians, had a place, for the "light of Christ shines in different degrees under different dispensations." Yet this large charity did not allow him to prophesy smooth things. He preached as a man who believed in everlasting

penalties, in the reality of hell fire, in the need of conversion. And the reality of his faith stands attested by the multitude and sincerity of his converts. False men do not create martyrs; veracity in nature and belief can alone work miracles in the sphere of spirit and conduct. The Cornish miners, the Lincolnshire labourers, the men of the Midland potteries and the Northern Vales were not of the kind to be changed by a man who seemed and was not real. And they became as he was: had to face riot, magisterial lawlessness, and violence—social blame for what ought to have earned social praise. Once when told that a whole waggon-load of Methodists had been brought before a justice of the peace, he inquired as to the charge, and was answered—"Why, they pretended to be better than other people; and besides, they prayed from morning to night." It is surely claim enough for immortality that he contributed to make men worthy of so good a reproach.

Wesley has been much praised as an organiser; and here he indeed displayed genius. He had the audacity of the greatest soldiers. He started a High Churchman, and he ended as he began, only with his political made into a more spiritual theory. He had one mark of genius: he allowed himself to be educated by facts, and he understood the facts that educated. Though no bishop in the legal sense, he knew himself to be one in the spiritual, and though only a Presbyter, he ordained a bishop for America, and constituted his Society there what it remains to this day—an Episcopal Church. His class meeting is a wonderful agency for its purpose—is able to fulfil functions of direction and discipline so as to make the whole body a homogeneous organism. Perhaps there is no body in the world which possesses as much of unity in matters of faith and discipline, of feeling and purpose; and this unity is but the least of the fruits which it owes to the organising genius of Wesley.

What Methodism has done, indirectly, for the English people is too large a question to be here discussed. One thing is evident—it did more to conquer the unbelief and irreligion of the eighteenth century than all the rational apologetics of the time. It created a new spirit in the English Church, a new temper in the English people, a mind that so revolted from the prevailing cold and arid deism, with its praise of a natural religion which Nature never knew, that disproof of it became superfluous. It kindled, too, such a spirit of philanthropy, such a sense of duty to the miserable, such an enthusiasm for humanity, that through it came the reform of manners, the emancipation of the slave, the more helpful relief of poverty, pity for the criminal, and improvement of the prisons. He said, "Of all the seats of woe on this side hell, few, I suppose, exceed, or even equal, Newgate. If any region of horror could exceed it a few years ago, Newgate in Bristol did; so great was the filth, the stench, the misery, and wickedness, which shocked all who had a spark of humanity left;" and his words and works, with the spirit, the love of souls born in crime, he created, helped to bring round a healthier state and a happier policy. He contributed, too, new elements to the public well-being. The end of his century was a period of revolution. That England escaped the fate of France was in no small measure due to Wesley and his Methodism. The new spirit of obedience and morals he evoked among the people, of duty and service he helped to create in the upper classes, made it easier to England to pursue her path of calm and orderly change while revolution convulsed her more brilliant neighbour. But of all his services, his greatest was to make a system so splendidly adapted to the English people in their century of greatest expansion. The power of the Anglican Church in England is immense; it would indeed be a marvel were it otherwise. She possesses enormous wealth, buildings that appeal to the imagination of the people and are symbols of their proudest past; for centuries she has had in her hands the education of statesmen and scholars, the resources of ancient universities and famous schools, and has been able to form and to hold the richest and most influential aristocracy in the world; and it would be little else than a miracle if in England, with all her privileges and all her power, she were not strong and great. But, in the greater England that lies beyond the seas, she must yield the palm of energy, efficiency, and the honour that belongs to the highest service to the Church that may be described as her latest child. In creating a society that has so powerfully contributed to keep the English people in the century of their vastest diffusion, greatest increase, and largest enterprise, still Christian and still progressive and order-loving, John Wesley accomplished a work that entitles him to the perpetual honour of our race and our kind.

A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

THE PEDAGOGUE AT LARGE.

ART is going off to school. She took to consorting with respectable children, and the eye of the Inspector lit upon her, and by this time she is well within the shadow of the prison-house. A week or two back Miss Annie S. Swan (a novelist herself, *nigroque simillima cygno*) stood up and advocated the founding of a school of literary method, advising parents at the same time to cultivate the gift of story-writing in their children. So "story-teller" will perhaps become a word of honour in our nurseries and the child's first lie reviewed in the parlour as Fiction with a Purpose. At the time, these proposals seemed to us to escape their own notice being comic; but "we're thinking *now* of Annie"—if Miss Swan will pardon the quotation—as a lady who understands the age in which she lives. Many signs have convinced us, and among them a protest in last Tuesday's *Times* (signed by Sir Arthur Blomfield, Messrs. Norman Shaw, George Bodley, Basil Champneys, T. G. Jackson, Alma Tadema, Onslow Ford, and others) against a Bill for making Architecture a close profession like Law, Physic, and Divinity. In other words, that which Miss Swan proposes for Fiction is in the case of Architecture to be developed to the extreme limit of absurdity and enforced by Act of Parliament. Art is to be a general term for a number of professions, taught at school and duly licensed.

The protest is a notable document, and the men who signed it deserve well of their fellows. For indeed it is time that this nonsense were stopped, or the pedagogic institutions of this country will be making all our artists small "by degrees." There is a notion abroad that a picture, a history, a novel, a statue, are very like a pudding—give any man the ingredients and he can be taught to make them. The British papa reads that Mr. Millais is made Sir John and earns a respectable income by "flinging on tints," or that Mr. Rider Haggard makes money "out of his head" by cock and bull stories about Africa, and at once he falls to asking why his Jacky and Tommy and Billy cannot find their living in this way. Then comes the schoolmaster, saying "to be sure, they can: Art may be taught." And very soon the corollary follows—"Good Art is Art based on good instruction. To ensure good instruction and to help the public to discern between good Art and bad, we must have examining-bodies and distribute medals, tickets, diplomas, licences." The plague is on us: the schoolmaster is turned loose, and the fair enclosures of the arts are filled with his braying and the kicking of his heels.

Is it too late to whisper in the ear of the British papa that all this is vanity: that his Jacky—"the small apple-eating animal whom we know"—will never learn from hand-books or pedagogues how to write a great novel or paint a great picture? He will readily assent to the proposition that a poet is born, not made: in the first place because it has all

the authority that comes of frequent repetition in a language with which he is imperfectly acquainted; and, secondly, because he wants Jacky, after all, to be a bit of a man and not a nonsensical half-and-half creature who rhymes. But novel-writing, for instance, is another affair altogether. Mr. Rider Haggard (he hears) is the son of an east-country squire, and his family is quite willing to own him. Why should not Jacky become a certificated novelist?

The answer, of course, is (to use Mr. Whistler's brief sentence) that Art happens. A boy afflicted with it can no more help it than he can help that equally rare disease, St. Vitus's dance; and Jacky may accumulate certificates, licences, diplomas enough to make himself a suit of clothes, yet they shall avail him nothing. You may swish the Latin declensions into him, but never a sense of colour or the gift of narrative. And we are emboldened to lay stress on this obvious truth because we have just come across a book that illustrates the point very neatly, and in a case that must be familiar to every householder.

Every householder knows, and believes himself able to appreciate, Dickens. Within the last few days two books have been published about this author—"The Childhood and Youth of Dickens," by Mr. Robert Langton (Hutchinson & Co.), and Mr. Percy Fitzgerald's "History of Pickwick: an Account of its Characters, Localities, Allusions, and Illustrations" (Chapman & Hall). It is with the former that we are concerned just now: for it follows with a tender interest every incident that can be traced in the education of the most popular novelist of the century, the man of all others that papa would like his Jacky to resemble. And this education, as everybody knows, the great boy picked up by running wild. "In the case of Mr. Dickens," says Bagehot, "it would have been absurd to shut up his observant youth within the walls of a college. They would have taught him nothing about Mrs. Gamp there; Sam Weller took no degree. The kind of life fitted to develop the power of apprehensive observation is a brooding life in stirring scenes . . ." And this is what Mr. Langton preaches,—not (be it remarked) leaving us to infer that Dickens was a great novelist in spite of his unfortunate and nomadic youth, but that his genius was actually helped by it. We may seem to use a hasty generalisation if we say that all great novelists depend for the most part on the impressions bitten into their life between the ages of eight and twenty-one. And yet in the case of Dickens, great and varied and prolific as he was, the evidence that he drew on these years as he drew on no other period of his life, is astounding. Mr. Langton himself, good man, is so astounded that he punctuates his book with notes of exclamation in place of full-stops. Dickens was born in a small house in a terrace at Portsea; before he was five his parents moved to a small house in a small terrace at Chatham, then to a yet smaller house in the same town, then to small houses in Camden Town and Gower Street, London; and then his father was taken to a debtor's prison, and Charles was sent to a blacking manufactory. That is all. His education, or, rather, that part of it which was imparted during school hours, was quite insignificant. In later years he did his fair share of travel, but the neighbourhood of Chatham (with adjacent Rochester), and those parts of London which he learnt as a book during his father's imprisonment, supply most of the scenery of "Pickwick," "Oliver Twist," "The Mudfog Papers," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," "The Seven Poor Travellers," "Little Dorrit," "The Uncommercial Traveller," "Great Expectations," and "Edwin Drood," besides innumerable pages in his other works. Names like Weller, Peggoty, Dorrit, Pordage, Drood, Waghorn, Sowster, "Old Cheeseman," "Tom-all-alone's," "Old Clem," "Satis House," all belong to that period, and may be traced back in many cases to the grave-yard by Rochester Cathedral; and so on, and so on, all proving, in Mr. Langton's pages, that Dickens owed a vast deal to his own childhood, but little to his schoolmasters. For, indeed, by playing truant for a day you will pick up more experience than you can find in a month's schooling; and for Dickens such experience was better in kind. Sainte-Beuve grew to look on all experience as a great volume, wherein it was all one if you read in Chapter XX., which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter XXIX., which is hearing the band play in the gardens. Only to the novelist the differential calculus, which but slightly sways human emotions, is a small matter compared to the band in the gardens. And the moral seems that the father who wishes his son to be a novelist should pay his creditors some inadequate shillings in every pound and send his boy into a blacking manufactory. Now whether it is worth while going through so much to attain so little, as Dickens's own charity-schoolboy said of the alphabet, is a question. And even if the attainment be great and its place in the sum of human work conspicuous: if the novelist, like the old playwright,

> "Quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
> Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit,"

it is obviously foolish to put him to school under Chrysippus and Crantor in the hope that they may teach to say wiser things than they themselves utter. It holds of all Art that, the schoolmaster being discovered among its garden-beds, he must be kicked out. But, while we eject the schoolmaster, we should remember that Art herself has been to blame. She was once mated with Social Disrepute. But somebody cried out, "What, no soap?" So he died, and she very imprudently married the Brompton Philistine. And of course there came to the wedding the Great Panjandrum himself, with the little button a-top (see Randolph Caldecott's drawing). So is Art's inheritance wasted and given over to the Professor and the wild ass.

BIG SHIPS AND BIG GUNS.

THE launches of last week were the theme at the time of an outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the press. The vast size of the *Royal Sovereign* seemed to fill the critics with admiration, and few paused to ask whether size is everything in a man-of-war. There are some questions, however, which must be asked, and if possible answered. What principle dominated the design of the *Royal Sovereign* and her consorts? Is that principle sound? Has it ever been properly considered? or, like Topsy, has the monster simply "growed"? Speed and manœuvring power, which many practical sailors regard as of the first importance, clearly have not been the ruling factors. The promised 17 knots on the measured mile—barely 15 for purposes of war—is obtainable on a less displacement; extreme handiness in action will scarcely be attained by a ship 380 feet long. Armour protection will not serve to account ultimately for the 14,000 tons, since the weight of armour depends mainly on the size and distribution of the objects to be protected. A ship is not built to carry armour, but to convey something which armour is required to protect.

The process of exhaustion can lead only to one conclusion. We are concentrating nearly 115,000 tons, and, in the long run, considerably over £8,000,000 sterling, upon eight vessels, solely because it has been accepted (1) that a 67-ton gun represents the necessary standard of armament, and (2) that it is essential to place *four* such guns on a single ship. Given these two propositions, all the rest follows logically enough. The naval architect is confronted with enormous deck-loads; the monster guns and the machinery required to move and load them must be adequately protected; a lurking disbelief in the big gun creates the demand for a large auxiliary armament; the ship

must be as unsinkable as possible; engines and boilers must be provided to propel the whole mass at a reasonable speed. The *Royal Sovereign* results; and while we may well admire the skill with which the problem has been worked out, it is possible to question the data, and to doubt whether those data have ever been properly considered at all. The naval architect is not to blame if the data, with which he *ought* to have nothing to do, are incorrect.

The whole policy for which the country is paying so heavily thus rests on the truth of two propositions. If either is false, that policy stands condemned. Select a lighter gun as the standard, or admit that at most the ship should carry but two 67-ton guns, and the *Royal Sovereign* must be regarded as a clever but costly *tour de force*—an exaggerated Eiffel Tower. The issue is simple, and the question is not by any means beyond the comprehension of the lay mind.

In deliberately adopting the 67-ton gun as the standard armament of a battle-ship, the object must be either to obtain armour penetration or what is called "shell-power"—*i.e.*, the possibility of bursting a large shell inside an enemy's vessel. As regards the first, the 10-inch gun of 32 tons would penetrate the armour of the *Royal Sovereign* anywhere at short range, and exceedingly few naval officers believe in the use of long-range fire in fleet actions. As regards the second, a 500 lb. shell appears to suffice for all purposes, if any value attaches to the opinion of Lord Dundonald, derived from actual experience with projectiles not one-seventh of this weight. The long peace has induced forgetfulness of the effects of shell-fire, of which the advocates of monstrosities have taken full advantage. The incidental drawbacks of the exaggerated gun—relative slowness of fire and absolute dependence upon machinery—appeal to every practical mind. It is true that Lord G. Hamilton has lately informed the House of Commons and the country that "hydraulic mechanism . . . is exceedingly simple"; but he unfortunately omitted to state that during the recent severe weather the guns thus worked were as a matter of fact hopelessly out of action, while the mere chance injury to a connecting pipe suffices to disable them for hours. Machinery is an admirable ally; we may even depend upon it absolutely to produce results unattainable in any other way; but for purposes of war, it is essential to be able, in the ultimate resort, to fall back upon man-power. The perversity of human nature created the craze for monstrous guns; and machinery, in rendering the handling of such guns technically possible, has assisted in obscuring real military requirements.

The second proposition is of another kind; but the task of showing that any advantage accrues from the aggregation of enormous guns on a single ship, which, for that reason, becomes itself a huge target, would be sufficiently difficult. Dispersion is the order of the day, and the principle is as applicable on sea as on land. Speed and handiness, flexibility and manœuvring power, are rightly held up as the requirements of naval war; and even if the necessity for a 67-ton gun is admitted, it may well be questioned whether two vessels, each carrying one such gun, would not be far more dangerous antagonists than a *Royal Sovereign* over-loaded with four. At least, two vessels cannot be disabled by a single lucky shell, or sent to the bottom by a single Whitehead discharged from a torpedo boat which had found its opportunity, or by a single blow from the ram. The costly eggs are not all in one enormous basket, certain to suffer in proportion to its size.

The policy of placing four huge guns on a single vessel has arisen partly by accident and partly because Italy embarked on a mistaken course of shipbuilding, and Great Britain, in this as in other matters, has of late years shown a singular tendency to accept the lead of other Powers. The designs of the *Duilio* of 1876 and the *Dandolo* of 1878, both over 11,000 tons, were determined—and spoiled—by the decision that each should carry four 100-ton guns. We followed suit with the *Inflexible*, of nearly 12,000 tons, in which also the ship was sacrificed to the 80-ton guns, with most unfortunate results. The Italians have gone on to the *Italia* and *Lepanto*, of more than 13,000 tons, which nevertheless have no side-armour protection whatever, except for their four heavy guns, and present huge targets to be cut to pieces by *any* gun that can reach them. We have our *Admiral* class, of which the less said the better. If any proof of the utter confusion of ideas as regards the first principles of ship design were wanting, the *Royal Arthur*, launched on the same day as the *Royal Sovereign*, supplies it. Here is a ship carrying no armour, and obviously not intended to engage heavily armoured vessels. Yet it is considered necessary to provide her with one gun capable of piercing nearly 19 in. of wrought iron at a thousand yards; while, to complete the irony of the situation, this gun is placed at the stern, and could only be used by turning a naked side to the enemy, or coaxing him to give chase.

The time has surely arrived for a return to first principles, and an adequate discussion of what modern requirements really are. The ship must no longer be sacrificed to guns of unnecessary weight, undesirably concentrated, and absolutely dependent on machinery for their working. Other considerations must receive due weight, and the many disadvantages entailed by the monster gun must be brought home to its remaining advocates. It is not the business of the naval constructor—whose mind naturally leans towards monumentalism and machinery—to lay down the data of the design of a ship of war, but of the men who will be called upon to fight her. And if the question is fairly examined, it will be found that, until a new metal for armour-plates has been invented, there is no need for the monster gun, nor for the 14,000-ton ship which has directly resulted from it.

A RAMBLER IN LONDON.

XXXII.—A Governesses' Agency.

THE agency is across the way, two doors to the right, up a stair. Without going to my window I can always tell when another governess has arrived in search of a situation, for ours is a quiet little street, and when they knock I hear them. Not a knocker in the street is disturbed without my hearing it. Governesses' knocks are commonplace; bolder, say, than a lover's, and less peremptory than a beggar's; but nevertheless I usually say to myself, "Another governess," when I hear a rap-tap-tap; and my warrant is that the governesses come and go in our street all day long. Sometimes I sit at my window and watch them. It would make you quite melancholy to know how many governesses knock at that door across the way between the hours of ten and six.

I have never been across the way myself. Only the other day it struck me as a curious thing, and characteristic less of me than of London life generally, that I have lived for years in this street and never been on the other side of it. So, as my eyes are not very good, I cannot tell what the notice says that is attached to the door-bell of the agency. Perhaps it is an unnecessary reminder to the governesses that they are not persons of any consequence, and must therefore wait patiently down there until it pleases some magnate to descend and open the door. That is one of my theories, and it has grown since I noticed long ago that the governesses have to knock several times before the door opens. I have thought that they would get an answer sooner if they imitated the knock of the telegraph boy, and I have pictured the indignation of those who run the agency on discovering that their sly visitor was nothing better than a trumpery governess. Fancy a governess's not being

willing to wait at the door as long as an agency likes! Another idea of mine about the notice is that it says governesses can only be admitted in batches of not less than three. I observe that one governess arrives and knocks and waits, that a second governess joins her and knocks and waits, and that a third appears before the door opens. It may be, however, that the governesses are requested to wait (or to go away if they like, for one governess more or less does not matter) until the door opens to some person of real importance. Other people than those of the agency live on that stair, and sometimes they open the door to come out or to go in while the governesses are waiting. Then the lucky governesses hold the door open with their foot, and ask each other (I see them) whether they dare enter.

Do you know anything about governesses, except that your married sister keeps one who is said to be quite respectable? Probably you do not. The subject is scarcely worth inquiring into—or, stop, there is one thing you know about them: that they are easily got. Where to get a really good chop is one of the problems of life, but where to get a really good governess—pooh! they are as common as cabbages in a country garden, and almost as inexpensive. The novelists know very little about governesses. When I was young I used to read novelettes that had governesses for heroines. (Of course I would not admit this in a signed article.) The governess was nearly always suspected of stealing a bracelet, and they searched her box (governesses have only one box), and there was the bracelet. But, you know, she did not really steal it, for she was heir to the estate all the time. The one thing I knew about governesses in those days was that they and their haughty mistress would change places in Chapter Twelve and Last. Nowadays my novels are in three volumes, and before I have finished the first my eldest daughter takes them all back to Mudie's. Nevertheless, I read enough to see that the governess in forty-eight chapters is not unlike the governess in twelve. She is less frequently charged with theft, and she is sometimes not the heir, but the eldest son always falls in love with her and his mother calls her a creature, and then to the admiration of all she refuses the eldest son's hand, which results in her being requested by the mother to take it.

Now I love the novelists, and admire their first volumes, but after sitting for an hour at my window I have thought that governesses are the one class of human beings whom they do not have, as the saying is, at their finger-ends. Hundreds of these governesses have been in "places" ere now, many of them in half a dozen places, but none has married the eldest son. Perhaps the son was willing, but it may have been that when the governess said she would not look at him until his mother yielded, the mother calmly let her go. So instead of marrying the eldest son she lost her place and returned to my street. This, however, implies that the novelists do not understand the worldly woman of society, which is not credible—they have been drawing her for so long. Perhaps the eldest son did not propose at all; only kissed her on the stair, and wondered why she was crying next day. Often, I fear, the eldest son does not even pay her that attention; she is not sufficiently pretty. Yet, though the governesses I see are not so beautiful as those I read about, they are nice to look at, except when they are sad. They are quite as pretty as the women I see from my penny seat at Rotten Row, and they look lovely the day after I have been to a fashionable theatre, where the ugliest women in London are to be seen nightly all ablaze with diamonds.

You will ask me, who never stepped across the street to read the notice near the agency door, how I know that many of these governesses have been in places before. I know it by the way they walk up to the knocker, by their business-like method of entering and leaving the agency, by the calmness with which they wait until the door opens, by the cynicism on their faces. They know that they are to be got cheap, and they are a little bitter, but they talk politely to each other, though they have never met before, and even make merry. Oh, you noisy ones who lose your heads in ecstasy over the bravery of this soldier and that, or over explorers who have penetrated Africa, if you could only know how brave these girls are! Ah! and not all girls, for many of them are worn women. I have heard them condemned for dressing tastefully, the younger ones even coquettishly. Why, it is part of their bravery. They have not sunk under their trials, but kept their little shoulders erect, and borne the burden courageously. They are making the best of their circumstances, looking sorrow in the face and defying it with a pretty bonnet. These three at the door just now do not know what will happen unless they get a place shortly; but that is not what they are telling each other. They are laughing, gossiping, I dare swear, about the most inconsiderable trifles. They are keeping their troubles to themselves. If you do not believe me, watch them after they have separated. One droops her head now—— But I only ask you to watch them if you choose. I have given up watching them when they leave the agency. It makes me melancholy.

Some come for a place who have not been governesses before. There was a pale woman today, who, I feel convinced, has lately been wearing widow's weeds. Perhaps she took them off because people want their governesses to be bright. She came out of the agency with a smile on her face, and then it disappeared suddenly, as if she had remembered something. I suppose she had been smiling in the agency that they might be favourably impressed. My dear sir, you who jest about the little governess, was there nothing brave in that? We have twenty romances a day at the door of the governesses' agency. Hardly had the pale woman gone when a girl of eighteen or thereabouts walked down the street with a boy some years younger. When they came to the door I knew they were looking for, they gave each other a quick glance and passed on. After a little the girl came back alone and knocked timidly, and she was very frightened. But the boy stood near and nodded to her, and though I suppose he could not have been more than fourteen, and was only her brother, every nod said that he loved her, and you have no idea how much strength it seemed to give her. He had to wait ten minutes for her, and I saw him brush his eyes with his sleeve and then knit his lips. He was making up his mind, I believe, to be a man as quickly as he could. When she came out he said something to her that made her smile. I suppose it was about the house he was to take and she was to be mistress of by-and-by. Then they were gone, and how that little comedy is to end I shall never know, for not all the acts can be played in this street. But I see enough to know that if the novelists fail in stories about governesses, it is not for lack of heroines.

WHITECHAPEL AS A PORTENT.

SADLER has gone off into space "waving good-bye with his hat," and the latest Whitechapel murder reverts to the chronic condition of mystery. The supposition that Sadler was the author of this latest crime promised to take it out of the category of Whitechapel murders. The certainty that he was not puts it into the category again. From first to last the business must have taken less than five minutes; and this shows the practised hand. That, however, is not the point. All speculations about the murderer are profitless, except such as are ways and means of detection. It may still profit to speak about his victims. The catching and hanging of him would be a relief to the public conscience, and it would add to the security of the streets, but it would do nothing towards the solution of that problem

of social misery and social neglect with which his exploits have served to remind us we have yet to deal. Years, perhaps centuries, after the Whitechapel murders are forgotten as crimes, they will be cited as evidences of a social state. There is no such reading as the reports of these cases, in all our literature of the Bitter Cry. They photograph a whole society, and what a society! Take the admitted facts of Sadler's drunken debauch—we are not here concerned with the morality of it—and what a conception of pleasure! Long voyages of weeks and months—and not voyages on deck, but in the stifling stoke-holes of big ships, dozens of feet below the water-line—and then, for break and recreation, this run ashore! It is like the running of the swine in the miracle. For whole days and nights at a stretch, it is not much more than one dreary experience of drunkenness, varied by robbery and beating. At night, it is the common lodging-house, and the unnameable horrors there!

We make bold to say that the common lodging-houses were never "done" until the period of the Whitechapel crimes. The great Dutch masters would not have disdained the subject of the lodging-house kitchen. Short of certain mediæval conceptions of the final torment, nothing can be more awful in its suggestion of debasing misery and pain. The drunken ones snore, with their heads on the table where all eat, and nobody minds. The literature of these cases—for a literature it is in the mere shorthand reports—supplies in piecemeal fashion a perfect picture of human degradation. The victim of the Hanbury Street murder is noted as a particularly quiet lodger. She has had only one "row" in the kitchen, in the course of which she has received a "clout" on the forehead, and a bruise on the chest. No questions are asked at the lodging-houses—no question but whether you want a single or a double "bunk." The bunks are separated by a sort of screen—that is all. Chapman regularly occupies "Number 29"—"sometimes by herself, sometimes not." Personal identity is well-nigh lost in these dens. They are known by a nickname, by a rag of clothing, often only by a mark. One of the murdered women had "T. C." tattooed on her forearm—that is all. It was done years ago, when she had a husband, and by the husband, as a sort of earmark. Fidelity is not a forgotten virtue in such places: it is simply a non-existent one. This woman has fallen in the fifth, or fiftieth, reversion of companionship, to some dock labourer, and though he is perfectly aware of the life she leads, "they were always the best of friends." Her own daughter, by the tattooing husband, was equally well aware of the dock labourer, but did not take him amiss. She did not know that there had been any marriage between her mother and father; she had "never seen the marriage lines." They meet and part, like midges in the sun. Her father may be alive, or he may be dead; she has not seen him for eighteen months—that is the only certain thing. He was a soldier, "so she has heard," but she knows nothing of his regiment. She has two brothers, but she has also lost all trace of them. A talking ox in the shambles, questioned about his family, might answer in just the same way.

The streets by day, the lodging-houses by night—often, as in this last case, the streets day and night—that is the life. When they are ill, or very tired, they take a turn in the casual ward, "just to pick up a bit," as one might run down to Brighton or to Eastbourne. When they are drunk, the lock-up is the proper accredited place of rest. It is understood that the police will take them there to get sober. There is no malice in it—quite the other way. They revive in a few hours, and then they are let out, without troubling the magistrate. They are on perfectly good terms with the gaolers. Mary Kelly is kept in a cell till one in the morning, and is then turned out sober. When next she is seen, it is with her throat cut from ear to ear. The gaoler knew she was reviving, when, on listening at the door of the cell, he heard her singing a song. He looked in, and saw her sitting on the bench or wooden bed. She asked when she would be let go. He said, "As soon as you are able to take care of yourself." "I am able to take care of myself now," she answered, and, in a quarter of an hour, or so, he opened the door. He takes care, however, not to open it too soon, for he knows perfectly well why she is in a hurry to be set free. "What time is it?" she asks, when it is opened at last. "Too late for you to get any more drink," replies the friend of man. As she passes out he takes a kindly leave of her. "I said, 'Please pull the door to.' She said, 'All right; good night, old cock.'"—And so she goes forth to her doom. When the murder is known, the whole dismal neighbourhood seems to "see blood." Other drunken wretches clamour at the station door, and want to be let in to look at the man arrested on suspicion. They are let in, and are locked up in another cell. "Five shillings or five days" is the magistrate's summary decision next morning. There would have been little to see, even if they could have seen it—only one as drunk as themselves "sitting in the cell in a state of deep lethargy, taking apparently no notice of anything." A man, who lives adjacent to the scene of murder, admits people to his back yard at a penny a head to peep, over his garden wall, at the spot where the body was found. The paupers who keep the body in the mortuary are the stupidest paupers the guardians have been able to find. They are old and quite demented, and so useless for the purposes of justice, that after vain attempts to get a plain answer from them to a plain question, the coroner orders them to stand down. Such is the normal state of thousands and tens of thousands in the "murder area," and, such as it is, it will puzzle posterity to the latest times. The judgment of posterity will probably be that we were all savages together, with only the difference between broadcloth and fustian to mark the difference between East and West.

THE PROSPECTS OF THE CYCLING SEASON.

IN all that relates to cycling there will be more interest than ever this year. It will be an exciting season, on the racing-path and on the road; and may be a most sensational one. Last year cycling, considered as a sport, was to a great extent revolutionised by the introduction of the pneumatic tire; and it is practically certain that the revolution will be completed during the forthcoming season. Every cyclist remembers the coming of the pneumatic from Ireland last summer, the mirth which its appearance provoked when it was first seen on the Paddington track, and the subsequent astonishment (passing into something like stupefaction) at its performances, when the Dublin crack, R. J. Mecredy, ran away on it with the four safety championships. The big, ugly, hollow rubber tube was a regular Eclipse on the path. At the Stanley Show it had been dubbed (and, indeed, looked rather like) a steam-roller; but when it came to the challenge in the last lap of a race, the steam-roller went like a streak of lightning through the solid-tired machines.

With a single exception, the pneumatic was first over the mark in every important race last season. The exception was the great road-race on the North Road, in which Holbein, riding a cushion-tired safety, covered no fewer than 336½ miles in twenty-four hours. T. A. Edge, riding a pneumatic, came in second. But Holbein is a better rider than Edge on any machine, and would certainly have accomplished a much greater distance in the same time on a pneumatic. C. A. Smith, who rode a pneumatic when he beat Selby's coach record to Brighton and back by a full hour, averaged twenty-two miles an hour during portions of his return journey. It was on a pneumatic that T. A. Edge rode a hundred

miles in five hours and twenty-seven minutes, beating all records, both on the road and on the path, for that distance.

Moreover, comparing the pneumatic with the solid tire, the marvellous speed attainable on the former does not necessitate a proportionate amount of exertion on the part of the rider. It is less exhausting to ride very fast on the pneumatic than it is to ride at a much slower pace on any other machine. In the article in the *New Review* on "Cycling, Past, Present, and Future," by Mr. and Mrs. Pennell, it is stated with perfect accuracy that the special merit of the pneumatic is the elasticity which extends entirely round the tire. The compression of the air within the tube is the secret at once of the speed and of the ease with which machines fitted with this tire are ridden.

Despite its extraordinary successes in racing, the pneumatic did not at first catch on amongst the general body of cyclists. It was very dear, it was liable to burst, and it was only to be procured in Dublin. It is still dear, but recent improvements in the manufacture are believed to have reduced to a minimum the old danger of bursting, and we understand that the tires can now be fitted at English depôts in London and Coventry. Dear or cheap, and whatever other disadvantages the pneumatic may still be found to possess, it is very certain that every crack rider will use it this season. The reason is simple: no other machine in a race in which the pneumatic is ridden will possess the ghost of a chance against it.

The cushion tire has been rather a disappointment. Roughly speaking, the cushion may be described as a cheap substitute for the pneumatic. The pneumatic consists of a hollow canvas-lined rubber tube, rather bigger than a garden hose, with an inner tube of rubber, which is inflated just like a football. The cushion, as Mr. and Mrs. Pennell put it, is "simply a large rubber tire with a hollow core." It does much to deaden vibration, but it possesses none of the marvellous elasticity of the pneumatic; hard work on the road soon reduces it to flabbiness, and a cushion that has "gone flabby" is practically done for. Your pneumatic may be temporarily spoiled by being punctured, but punctures are now easily and quickly repaired. A spoiled cushion is past mending. It is beyond a doubt that the pneumatic will hold both road and path this season; and we may go further and say that no other tire will even successfully compete with it which is not constructed on the principle of air-compression within the tube. The general introduction of the pneumatic will give special interest to the racing of 1891.

Mr. and Mrs. Pennell are almost absurdly unfair to our racing amateurs. They refer in a contemptuous sentence to "the few amateurs who do exist here." This is really silly. Speaking generally, our best racing men are amateurs, and by far the most interesting sport on the path is that which is promoted by the National Cyclists' Union. Professional racing has been steadily declining in England during some years past, and is now chiefly encouraged in the Midlands. Our amateur cracks are a splendid band, and it will be generally admitted that they "take some beating." Such men as Osmond, Synyer, Wood (ordinary); Mecredy, Jones, Parsons (safety); Sansom, Turner, Crump, Stroud, Stadnicki (tricycle); and Holbein, Dangerfield, C. A. Smith, the Edges, and Shorland (road-racing), represent all that is most brilliant as well as most straightforward in the sporting circles of cycledom.

Road-racing will go on as usual, we fancy, this season. Being quite illegal, it is merely tolerated by the police; but it is not the unmitigated nuisance which some of its opponents would have us believe. Racing on much-frequented roads in the immediate neighbourhood of London is quite improper; but all important races of this sort are held on the least-frequented part of the north road, at a considerable distance (twenty to thirty miles) from town. Mr. and Mrs. Pennell endeavour to enlist our sympathies for the "poor wretch, almost dead, tearing along" the high-road at terrible speed, and "hounded on by a lot of pacemakers clearing the road for him." But no one compels any "poor wretch" to do this; and as for the poor wretch's pacemakers (who, by the way, could scarcely "hound him on" while "clearing the road for him"), who that started to "break a record" would be unwise enough to dispense with the all but invaluable services of those assistants?

"Loafing" has been driven off the road by the use of pacemakers, but their use on the path is out of the question. Thanks, however, to the efforts of Dr. Turner in England, and Mr. Mecredy in Ireland, a Cycle Racing Association is being rapidly formed, which, it is hoped, will successfully cope with this evil. The main object of the Association is to bind its members to share the pacemaking, and the scheme has, with one or two exceptions, received the approval of all the prominent racing men.

It may be noted that the safety is becoming more popular every day, and is displacing both the ordinary and the tricycle. Middle-aged men who began on the tricycle are now taking to the safety. In America it is being much ridden by the other sex; but English women are still rather shy of the two-wheeler.

THE DRAMA.

"ALL I want is four trestles, four boards, two actors, and one passion." So spake the elder Alexandre Dumas, contrasting the simplicity of his own dramatic method with Victor Hugo's weakness for mechanical "properties." Mr. Haddon Chambers, author of *The Idler*, now being played at the St. James's, is—in one respect at least—another Victor Hugo. He has a weakness for "properties." So important are they in his play that one suspects he bought them as a job-lot at an auction ("By Order of the Executors of the late M. Scribe"), and then wrote a drama for the purpose of utilising them all. They would have served a Dutch painter for a good bit of still-life. On the floor is a bouquet. A fan lies on the table, and near it is a case of pistols, flanked by spirit-bottles, cut lemons, tumblers, cigars dry and green. The clock on the mantelpiece shows the hour of twelve, and at the back of the room are heavy curtains hiding a balcony. Let us take these "properties" and see if we cannot reconstruct Mr. Haddon Chambers's play out of them, for ourselves, by the method of Zadig.

You have not forgotten the episode of Zadig and the horse in Voltaire's story? "The finest steed in the royal stables had escaped from the hands of a groom into the plains of Babylon. The Master of the Horse asked Zadig whether he had seen the royal steed pass that way. 'You mean,' replied Zadig, 'a horse which gallops well; it has a small hoof; its tail is three feet and a half in length; the ends of its bit are of twenty-three-carat gold; its shoes are of fine silver.'—'Which way did it go?' asked the Master of the Horse.—'I have not seen it,' answered Zadig, 'and no one has described it to me.'" Then, you remember, the sage explained how he had reconstructed the horse from the various traces it had left in its passage.

Now for the application to Mr. Haddon Chambers's "properties." Our first guess is very easy. The pistols obviously mean a duel. But this is an English play, and ordinary Englishmen do not fight duels. The owner, then, of the pistol-case is either a foreigner (perhaps an American? Note the *green* cigars) or an Englishman who has sojourned in some country where pistolling is still practised. Our next guess is equally easy. The duel is about the lady of the bouquet and the fan. Is she virtuous? Clearly, because we are at the St. James's. But the juxtaposition of the fan and the whiskey-bottles, lemons, cigars, etc., shows that the lady is in a bachelor's rooms, and the duel shows that somebody is entitled to be jealous of her presence there.

We at once get our two combatants—the lady's husband and the bachelor (a would-be seducer, of course). A moment's thought, and we see that the fan is on the table to reveal the lady's presence to the husband. Where, then, is she hiding? Why, behind that heavy curtain at the back, necessarily.

But how to account for the presence of a virtuous wife in a bachelor's rooms? Remember, we have two *pièces justificatives* left, the clock and the bouquet. Obviously the clock won't help us much. Stage clocks always indicate the hour at which something catastrophic is going to happen. The fact that the hands of this clock are pointing to twelve shows that, like what the soldier said, it is not evidence; for twelve cannot be the hour of the lady's visit to the bachelor. A wife could not easily be absent from home at midnight, and the fan excludes the alternative hypothesis of twelve noon. The bouquet is more promising. It has been perfumed with a subtle poison by a jealous princess and sent to the lady—stay! that is *Adrienne Lecouvreur*. The bachelor has brought it in the absence of—no! that is *Divorçons*. Think again, and you notice the bouquet is on the floor. Then it must have been dropped, and dropped of course as a signal. Now bouquets on the stage are only carried at weddings, Drawing Rooms, and balls. This bouquet cannot have been dropped at a wedding, for the play is not *Le Chapeau de Paille d'Italie*. Nor at a Drawing Room, for it is not *The Cabinet Minister*. So the wife must have dropped the bouquet at a ball as a signal to someone—the bachelor, of course. Moreover, the signal obviously means that the lady consents to visit the bachelor's rooms. The husband must have been present at the ball, or signalling would not have been necessary. Hence we establish the fact that the husband and the bachelor are friends.

Let us now summarise the results which Zadig's method has yielded. A virtuous wife drops her bouquet at a ball to signify to a bachelor friend of her husband that she will pay a nocturnal visit to his chambers. There a fan betrays her presence to her husband, an Englishman who has acquired a knack of pistol-shooting in lawless countries (our first hypothesis, that he is a foreigner, is excluded by the consideration that English stage heroines never marry aliens), and who promptly proposes to exchange shots over the table with the would-be seducer. Up to this point, observe, Mr. Haddon Chambers's play may be said to be an inevitable inference from the "properties" with which it starts. So far, it has invented itself. The first and only demand upon the playwright's own invention arises in that little matter of a motive for the wife's nocturnal visit to the bachelor. Even here Mr. Haddon Chambers prefers his inventions, as the youthful trader preferred to steal his brooms, ready made. Adapting the central situation of *Measure for Measure*, he sends the lady to the bachelor's rooms as the price for her husband's life, which the bachelor undertakes to save from a *dieu vengeur* whose brother the husband has been so unfortunate as to kill. By making the *dieu vengeur* an American, Mr. Chambers satisfactorily disposes of those green cigars. The only remaining "property" is the clock, indicating twelve, and that is utilised by appointing the duel for the stroke of noon.

The play is luxuriously mounted, and the players are faultlessly dressed at the St. James's, which is not conducted on the Dumasian principle of "four trestles and four boards." Indeed, so far as sumptuary details and Persic apparatus, generally, are concerned,

> They nothing common do nor mean
> Upon that Alexandrine scene.

The acting, too, is excellent, as is only to be expected from a company which includes Mr. Alexander and Miss Marion Terry, Mr. Herbert Waring and Lady Monckton, Miss Maude Millett and Mr. Nutcombe Gould. A real American has been imported to smoke the green cigars, a Mr. John Mason, who is astute enough to humour the Britishers by talking stage-American as though it were his native tongue.

More critics than one have already discovered a certain family likeness between Mr. Coghlan's new play, *Lady Barter*, produced last Saturday at the Princess's, and *Le Demi-Monde* of Alexandre Dumas *fils*.

Parallel columns might be employed to show that the two plots are practically one and the same. Thus:—

Le Demi-Monde.	*Lady Barter.*
Olivier de Jalin schemes to prevent the marriage of Suzanne d'Ange, whom he knows to be a worthless adventuress, with his bosom-friend Raymond de Nanjac, who will listen to no accusation against the lady.	Colonel Pearce schemes to prevent the marriage of Lady Barter, a worthless adventuress, with his friend Lord Brent, whose eyes are blinded by love.
Olivier contrives that a packet of the lady's compromising letters shall be handed to Raymond; but the device fails, because Suzanne had employed another hand to write them.	The Colonel hands Lord Brent the key of a desk containing letters that compromise the lady; but the device fails, because his lordship is too proud a man to read other people's letters.
At last Olivier persuades Raymond to play eaves-dropper while Suzanne is induced by a trick to declare herself in her true colours.	But his lordship is not too proud to hide behind a curtain while the Colonel makes an announcement to the lady which causes her to declare herself in her true colours.

But this successful trick is not the same in the two plays, and the difference is significant of the diverse standards of masculine chivalry towards women accepted in Paris and in London. English critics have always protested that Olivier, in feigning love for Suzanne, and so inducing her (in Raymond's sight) to fall into his arms, is no gentleman. It is Mr. Henry James, I think, who, on this account, calls Olivier a "cad," though Raymond calls him "le plus honnête homme que je connaisse." There is no loss of delicacy in Colonel Pearce's case, as he simply has to tell the lady that, upon her declaring herself the adventuress she is, she will inherit a large fortune from a deceased lover. On the other hand, Lady Brent is a much less human personage than Suzanne d'Ange, more heartless and mercenary; and that difference, too, has its significance, according, as it does, with the English theatrical convention which compels all adventuresses to be not whity-brown, but one black blot—not women, but monsters of depravity. It need hardly be said that Mrs. Langtry makes the loveliest of monsters—an irresistible reincarnation of "la belle dame sans merci"—apparelled by Worth.

A. B. W.

THE WEEK.

Two volumes are promised from Lord Tennyson this year. He is busy just now with some new poems, which will appear later on. In the meantime Messrs. Macmillan & Co. are about to issue fifteen of his unpublished poems, for which during the last thirty years Lady Tennyson has written melodies. We are much inclined to doubt the American item of literary news, that the Laureate has written some autobiographical notes for a second edition of Dr. Henry Van Dyke's book on "The Poetry of Tennyson"!

New volumes of verse are announced by Mr. Arthur Symons, Miss Mathilde Blind, and Mr. Arthur J. Munby. Mr. Symons is one of the younger generation of poets from whom important work may be expected. His new volume is to be called "Silhouettes," and will consist of short impressionist lyrics. *A propos* of impressionism, why does Mr. Symons not give us his impression of Verlaine? Already Verlaine's works, at Mr. Symons' request, have been placed on the shelves of the British Museum Library; and they are

bound, sooner or later, to have at least a vogue among that portion of the reading public, small as it may be, which cares for these things. MR. SYMONS has made an exhaustive study of the modern VILLON, whom DAUDET calls "*mon maître*," and has besides notes of conversations with this "sad, bad, glad, mad brother," which many of us wish to see.

MISS BLIND'S book will appear shortly after Easter, and will be called "Dramas in Miniature." Three of these—*The Message*, *A Mother's Dream*, and *The Russian Student's Tale*—will deal with the tragic side of woman's life. MR. MUNBY'S verses will be the next volume of the Rosslyn Series. MR. MUNBY is best known by his poem "Dorothy"; but many others published anonymously are to be collected in the forthcoming volume.

WE have received the third edition of MR. ALFRED AUSTIN'S dramatic poem, "Prince Lucifer" (MACMILLAN), and a slim volume of "Verses" (UNWIN) by MR. R. K. LEATHER. MESSRS. LONGMANS have published "A Ladder of Heaven," an allegory in verse, with a preface by the BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

THE literary portraits of NEWMAN, KEBLE, HURRELL FROUDE, WARD, and others, which grace the pages of the late DEAN CHURCH'S "Oxford Movement" (MACMILLAN), will cause it to be much sought after. The volume is based upon the author's personal recollections, and follows the course of the movement from its first beginning in 1833 to NEWMAN'S secession in 1845.

MR. RUDYARD KIPLING is busy with a new story to be called "Mother Maturin;" MRS. HUMPHRY WARD'S "David" is almost ready; and MR. GEORGE MOORE, whose "Impressions and Opinions" will appear in a few days, is at work on a novel dealing with racing, betting, and low life. The heroine is a servant-girl, and the book will be called "Mother and Child." A new story by MR. RIDER HAGGARD, "Eric Brighteyes," which has been running in one of the London weekly newspapers, will be published shortly by MESSRS. LONGMANS. MRS. AMÉLIE RIVES CHANLER'S new story will be called "A Girl of the Pavement."

WE had pleasure last week in announcing a popular edition of LANDOR'S "Citation and Trial of William Shakespeare." We have now to hail with equal satisfaction the announcement of a complete edition of his "Imaginary Conversations." It will be in six volumes, the first appearing in April, and the remainder at intervals throughout the year. The text will be compared with all previous editions, and a bibliography appended to each Conversation. MESSRS. J. M. DENT & CO. are the publishers, and the editor is MR. J. C. CRUMP, who prepared "Pericles and Aspasia" for the Temple Library. LANDOR expected to dine late, with a select company; but it is possible, after all, that the guests may be more numerous than he anticipated.

THE HON. LIONEL A. TOLLEMACHE'S "Safe Studies" and "Stones of Stumbling," which have hitherto been privately circulated, are now published in two handsome volumes by MR. WILLIAM RICE, and sold at cost price. It has taken MR. TOLLEMACHE seven years to make up his mind to this, as his objections to charging anything for the product of his thought were almost insuperable. These studies appeared originally in the *Fortnightly Review*. They excited much attention at the time, and from their brilliant statement of strong and independent views are likely again to arouse interest and provoke criticism.

MAJOR CASATI'S "Ten Years in Equatoria, and the Return with Emin Pasha" (WARNE), is in many ways the most important work yet issued on the African question. It gives an independent and authoritative account of the events which have occurred during the last ten years in Equatorial Africa. Another book on Africa which will be read with avidity when it appears is DR. H. W. DULCKEN'S translation of DR. CARL PETERS'S book, "New Lights upon Dark Africa." We may mention in this connection "A Colonial Tramp" (WARD & DOWNEY), by HUME NISBET, a record of travels and adventures in Australia and New Guinea.

MR. FREDERICK D. MOCATTA, whose name is a household word in every Jewish circle, has provided an English translation of PROFESSOR H. GRAETZ'S "History of the Jews" (NUTT). MISS BELLA LÖWY is the translator-in-chief. The book will occupy five volumes, bringing the history of the Jews down to 1870.

THERE seems to be a temporary lull in the publication of three-volume novels. We have to note only two—"A Draught of Lethe" (SMITH, ELDER), the romance of an artist, by ROY TELLET, and "The Cobra Diamond" (WARD & DOWNEY), by ARTHUR LITTLE. In two volumes, with a very remarkable binding, we have "La Fenton" (EDEN, REMINGTON), by GWENDOLEN DOUGLAS GALTON. The number of one-volume stories makes up for the scarcity of the more voluminous fiction. "The Type-written Letter" (TRISCHLER), by R. H. SHERARD, is already in its tenth thousand. MESSRS. TRISCHLER also publish in one volume "The Black Drop," by HUME NISBET; "The Mystery of Ritherdons Grange," by SAUMAREZ DE HAVILLAND, and "The Romance of a Lawn Tennis Tournament," by the LADY DUNBOYNE. "Thornleigh House" (SUTTON, DROWLEY), a North-country story, is by W. E. CHADWICK, and "Country House Sketches" (WARD & DOWNEY) by C. C. RHYS. MESSRS. SKEFFINGTON & CO. publish "I, Me, and Him" anonymously, and MR. HEINEMANN, a popular edition of BERTRAM MITFORD'S "Romance of the Cape Frontier."

"VOILÀ un homme!" exclaimed NAPOLEON after talking with GOETHE at Erfurt. The wish which most people have felt to know what GOETHE said to extort such an exclamation from a man so jealous of greatness in others is at length gratified. PRINCE TALLEYRAND was present at the interview, and kept a record of it, which, he affirms, was approved of by GOETHE. BARON VON BUNSEN quotes it in its entirety in the *New Review*. NAPOLEON angled for a dedication from GOETHE, and received a well-merited and cleverly administered rebuff. All GOETHE'S remarks and replies to NAPOLEON are most masterly; and BARON VON BUNSEN thinks that internal evidence militates against any suspicion that the conversation has been artfully twisted in order to unduly exalt the poet.

APROPOS of MR. ATKINSON'S extraordinary proposal in the House of Commons on Tuesday, that the Government should bring in a Bill compelling leader-writers to sign their articles, those who are curious to know the opinions of press-men themselves on the question of anonymity *v.* the signature may be referred to a couple of articles which appeared in the *New Review* about a year ago, wherein MR. TIGHE HOPKINS printed letters that he had received from nearly thirty public men, authors, and journalists, including MR. GLADSTONE, MR. JOHN MORLEY, MR. LABOUCHERE, MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY, MR. WILLIAM BLACK, MR. SALA, MR. LANG, MR. WILLIAM ARCHER, MR. T. P. O'CONNOR, MR. LUCY, MR. SMALLEY, MR. HUTTON, MR. H. D. TRAILL, MR. L. F. AUSTIN, MR. WEMYSS REID, DR. W. H. RUSSELL, MR. ANDREW

LANG, MR. JAMES RUNCIMAN, MRS. LYNN LINTON, etc. Almost every conceivable shade of opinion on the subject found expression in a most remarkable collection of epistles.

PITY the poor millionaire! MR. CARNEGIE says in the *Nineteenth Century* that the millionaire who appreciates his obligations must die penniless. He must give all away in his lifetime instead of leaving his hoards to his children. The more millionaires, argues the ingenuous CARNEGIE, the fewer paupers. A country is sure to be the most prosperous in which the largest number of citizens amass millions. If we all had millions, this would be true; but that is not what MR. CARNEGIE means. He seriously maintains that the habit of accumulating vast wealth is excellent for the community and morally beneficial to the accumulator. All human experience is against him, but that is a trifling circumstance. MR. CARNEGIE is, no doubt, a living example of self-sacrifice, but his enthusiasm has a curious flavour of Chadband.

THE latest catch-word in America is "The New South." It is an industrial catch-word, not a literary one. It refers to the South of iron, cotton, and rice, not the romantic South of poetry and fiction. Its creator was HENRY W. GRADY, who wrote a perfervid book with that title. The South is what MR. GRADY reveals it to be—new, rich, marvellous, unexplored. Moreover, it is fully entitled to the name he gives it, for its development so far is the work of Southern capital. MR. GRADY sweeps aside the Negro question by the simple method of an assertion: The Negro absolutely must not and cannot rule the whites in the South. Most sane people will take the same view; but that is not the Negro question. The Negro question is, What is to be done with Quashee? And it is daily becoming as urgent as our Irish question. We can only hope that it will not take as long to solve.

WHO is JOACHIM PECCI? Who is NEANDER HERACLEUS? The first is the real name, the second the Arcadian name, of POPE LEO XIII. The Arcadia is an Italian literary society which has just celebrated its second centenary. Every member of this society must change his name on entering it and take that of an imaginary shepherd, and the Pope has belonged to it since 1832. He is eighty-one, and bent double with anxieties and cares, yet he still attends its meetings, and has recently written a Latin elegy for its bi-centenary. The POPE'S Latin verses, of which he has published many, are said to be beautiful in their way.

A SPRIGHTLY Parisian journalist has framed an imaginary list of the pictures which the French artists should have sent to Berlin. Needless to say that the subjects were not chosen in deference to German susceptibilities. But what is the particular point of a picture of Hamlet and his father's ghost? Does the sprightly journalist imagine that Hamlet killed his father, and that the subject would be specially unwelcome to the German Emperor? No doubt some tremendous satire is designed, but the bearing of it might have been made more apposite had Shakespeare been first consulted.

"OUTSIDER" writes: "I wish, sir, you would be kind enough to ask in THE SPEAKER, Where is the almanac of the Secretary of the Royal Academy of Arts? The Burlington House people have decided that outsiders shall send in their pictures this year on the 27th, 28th, and 30th of the present month. The 27th of March will be Good Friday. The 28th will be, I imagine, an almost universal holiday. The 30th will be Easter Monday, a Bank Holiday. It is, I suppose, no particular business of SIR FREDERICK or his colleagues (the R.A.'s, as you know, are allowed an extra week) how the outsiders get their pictures carted to Piccadilly; but will they condescend to consider for a moment what porterage is likely to be available on Good Friday and Easter Monday?"

FROM the sentimental point of view, the most interesting concert of the season will doubtless be MR. SIMS REEVES'S farewell concert at the Albert Hall on the 11th of May. It is nearly fifty-two years since MR. REEVES made his first appearance on the stage. This was at Newcastle, and MR. REEVES, who was just seventeen, was then singing baritone parts. It is hoped that on the occasion of his farewell concert MADAME CHRISTINE NILSSON will sing once more. The RICHTER concerts will be a fortnight later than usual, DR. RICHTER not being able to finish his Continental engagements before the third week of May. SARASATE will give his customary six concerts during May and June, and the HANDEL Festival will be held in the latter month.

THE "House of Shelter" in Baggally Street, Burdett Road, E., of which MESSRS. HAROLD BOULTON and LEONARD NOBLE are the honorary managers, has found a powerful friend in MR. BEERBOHM TREE, who, with the good intent of replenishing the exchequer of that deserving institution, has given up the Haymarket Theatre on Wednesday week next, and is organising a dramatic and musical *Matinée*. Not only will MISS NORREYS, MISS LECLERCQ, MISS HORLOCK, MISS JULIA NEILSON, MADAME STERLING, MR. FERNANDEZ, MR. TREE himself, and other well-known artistes, contribute to the programme; but two Royal Princesses and a number of distinguished ladies have interested themselves to the extent of becoming patrons.

WE hear it is extremely likely that an attempt will be made to translate the Société des Vingt de Bruxelles into English, and form a London Twenty Club. The idea is to get the twenty artists together who consider themselves the best outsiders—that is to say, neither Academicians nor Associates—and then let them jointly acquire or hire some picture-gallery for the purpose of exhibiting their works. The wall-space available would be divided into twenty different sections of equal size, their allotment to be determined by ballot. Each member would then have his own space, which he might decorate and arrange as he pleased, and whereon he might display as many of his works as its limits allowed, or as few as his judgment advised. Over each section would be boldly blazoned the name of the artist. Such a society, in the face of the facts that the Grosvenor has disappeared, and that the New is somewhat too partial to particular schools, would undoubtedly cause justice to be done to certain men who under existing circumstances are likely to have their claims somewhat slighted. The difficulties in the way of its realisation are the scarcity of suitable galleries, and the fear those men who press closest against the gates of Burlington House might feel that their support of such a scheme would prejudice their chances for admission to the Academy.

AT the last pastel exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery considerable attention was roused by the picture called "Lawn Tennis," a group of modern men and maidens sauntering home in the gloaming after their game. The artist was that distinguished Belgian, M. FERNAND KHNOPFF; and a small collection of his works are now on view at the Hanover Gallery. He is a mystic, and his art, which after all is literary rather than pictorial, is full of symbol and allegory. The subject of the Sphinx has very special fascination for him, and he exhibits his well-known

picture bearing that name, and a series of very beautiful studies in crayon made for it, by which we trace the development from the unidealised head of a lovely model to the face of the wonderful creature with "absolute eyes that wean The pulse of hearts to the Sphere's dominant tune."

WHAT KHNOPFF really means by the Sphinx is, as perhaps it should be, enigmatical. She may be one of the cold, implacable Fates, KEATS' "Lamia," or a sad divinity debarred by her very goddesshood from tasting the coveted bitter-sweet of human passion. KHNOPFF is an interesting problem. He has obviously seen the work of his countrymen WIERTZ and VAN BEERS, of the English ROSSETTI and BURNE JONES, read CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, studied ALBERT DÜRER, and tried to Egyptianise the net result. He draws from the nude with grace and great refinement. His "Portrait of a Child" shows him to be possessed of a dainty sense of colour; and his landscapes betray the influence of Barbizon. He embodies in his work so many borrowed elements that it becomes in itself original.

AUSTRIA AND RUSSIA.

MUCH is being said at present as to the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Austria and Russia; and general satisfaction is expressed by European authorities at the prospect of a cordial understanding between the two countries. But I must confess that that satisfaction is not quite shared by the people in one interesting, if not very important, corner of Europe. The Balkan Peninsula is physically and politically peculiarly constructed. Clever M. René Millet lately, in a delightfully written study, has shown that it has no orographic centre. Meteorological observations through a number of years have shown that when Central and Western Europe have sunshine, we in the Balkan Peninsula have rain, and *vice versâ*. And often, perhaps even too often, political events which create satisfaction in Europe produce something like dissatisfaction with us in the Balkans. The peculiarity of our political position is just at this time illustrated by the apprehensions prevailing in all political centres of the peninsula. No politician amongst us ever desires to see the breaking out of a war between Russia and Austria. Yet the moment we see the Austrian Emperor and the Tzar shake hands with anything like cordiality, we are filled with all sorts of apprehensions, and ask in alarm: What does all this mean? This is exactly the question which at this instant is asked in the same tone, in the same spirit, and with the same feelings of distrust, by the politicians at the Bosphorus, by the anti-Russian Stambouloff in Sofia, and by the pro-Russian Radicals in Belgrade.

Of course, this inconsistency on our part is only the consequence of the abnormal conditions in the peninsula. If the Serbians and the Bulgarians were in cordial friendship—which, unfortunately, they are not—and if they, together with the Greeks, were to give their hands to the Sultan and declare themselves ready to uphold his throne on the Bosphorus, as they ought to do in their own most vital interests, the quiet of the Balkan nations would not be disturbed either by foreshadowings of a dreaded war or by meteoric flashes of cordiality between the Emperors in the North. But as matters now stand, Austria and Russia are much nearer to a complete understanding between themselves than are the Balkan nations to a frank, loyal, and wise combination of their forces for the protection of their national independence.

We cannot say what it is, but we feel and we see that something of more than usual importance is going on. Before the Archduke started on his recent journey, Russia and Austria exchanged not courtesies but practical services on the very territories where their interests have been hitherto supposed to be irreconcilably opposed. Austria supported Russian demands in Sofia against Nihilists. At the same time, Mr. Persiani's first word on his return from St. Petersburg to Belgrade was that the Tzar could not approve the continuation of Servia's provocative policy towards Austria. Russia did more still: she at once transferred from Belgrade Mr. Serguéyeff, the first Secretary of the Legation—a young diplomatist of the Hitrovo school, who, it is thought, had been actually engaged in exciting the Radicals of Servia against Austria. Naturally, this made a deep impression on the Belgrade politicians who had gone too far in their abusive attacks on Austria, and now suddenly found that they were cut away from their base of operation.

There are Slavophil politicians in Serbia who console themselves with the supposition that all this is only a sham; that Russia, not yet being quite prepared for fighting, wants to lull Austria, and so adjourn the declaration of war to a more convenient time. But the more responsible statesmen believe that the greatest vigilance and prudence are necessary, for all these shadows may be shadows of coming events, preceding the re-appearance of "the two spheres of legitimate influence in the Balkans." Nor would it be the first time that Russia had sacrificed Serbian interests to secure herself some desired end.

Anyhow, in the light of the present *rapprochement* between Austria and Russia, certain (until now disregarded) symptoms and facts of Austrian policy obtain a new significance. Through prejudices of race and peculiar political education, the average Serbian hates Austria. In these days even semi-official papers designate Austria openly as "the enemy from ages of the Serbians," while Russia is extolled as the country from which salvation is to come. Yet it was Russia which in Reichstadt offered Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria as the price of her neutrality; it was General Ignatieff who, in San Stefano, incorporated Serbian provinces into his "Great Bulgaria," and it was Russia which, in Berlin, claimed Pirot and Vranya for Bulgaria, while Austria, by her vote and her exertions at the Congress, saved these two important points to Serbia. Shortly after the Berlin Congress, and in consequence of the Russian treatment of Serbian interests at San Stephano, King Milan made a new departure in Serbia's foreign policy. He started from the point of view that though a Panslavonic Serbia constitutes a danger to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and justifies the distrust of that monarchy, a truly independent Serbia is no such danger, and that if Serbian politicians would meet Austro-Hungary with confidence, that Empire would probably answer by showing confidence in return, and perhaps even lend a friendly assistance to certain Serbian national aspirations. He wished to convince his own people that Austro-Hungary in her own interest must sincerely desire to see an independent and prosperous Serbia, and that, whatever the Austrians and Hungarians were in the past days, they may yet become warm and trusty friends of the Serbian nation. Of course, such a policy could not please the Panslavonic Committees in Russia. In the struggle which ensued, King Milan had on his side the majority of the educated men in Serbia; but the majority of the Serbian people were decidedly on the side of Russia against their own king. The end of the struggle, as everybody knows, was the abdication of King Milan. The Hungarian Government has in these last two years made repeated efforts to reconcile the Serbian population of Hungary. It has recognised their autonomy in educational and ecclesiastic matters, it has satisfied many claims of the extreme nationalists, it has let them choose their own Metropolitan and permitted this Head of the Church to assume the rather strange title for a prelate: "By God's grace and *the will of the people*, the Patriarch," etc. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, these

last two years, Austria herself has encouraged the Serbian national idea. Special facilities are granted for the establishment of national schools, for the building of churches, for the protection of their priests. All the judges and all the civil officers are obliged to know the Serbian language. There are Serbian newspapers which appear daily in Serajevo whose independent national spirit and free criticism of the administration of the province would astonish anyone out of England. Only a few years ago the Austrian authorities in the occupied provinces endeavoured to impose on the people the conviction that they are a special "Bosnian" nationality. Now these authorities openly and assiduously preach concord among Mussulmans, Catholics, and Orthodox, and impress on them that, though of different faith, they all are one and the same Serbian nation.

All this is very significant. It shows that Austria is earnestly endeavouring to win the confidence of the Serbians. It is a great stroke. Russian policy was based on the supposition that Austria never could win the confidence of the Serbian nation. King Milan and the Progressists thought that this was not only possible, but beneficial for both parties. King Milan and his old Progressist friends have disappeared, but Austria has redoubled her efforts in that direction. Is it from fear, or because she believes her chances are increased? As yet it is difficult to give a precise answer. One thing is clear, though the Slavophils of Russia seem quite blind to it, and that is this: Austria's chances must increase when, in the moment in which she gives open and official impulse to the Serbian national sentiment in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Slavophils of Russia are occupied in demonstrating to the Serbians that it is their duty to adopt the Russian language for literary and other purposes. I believe that it is due as much to this Slavophil infatuation as to the Austrian conciliatory policy, that a number of distinguished Serbians in Agram (Croatia) have recently formed a society for promoting the union of all Serbian countries under the Habsburg crown.

All these symptoms, taken together with the Archduke Ferdinand's exceedingly cordial reception by the Tzar, show that we are at the eve of some important changes in the East.

CHEDOMILLE MIJATOVICH.

THE CUCKOO VALLEY RAILWAY.

THIS century was still young and ardent when ruin fell on Cuckoo Valley. Granite and china-clay were scattered about the high moors at its head: and by the small town of Pont-eglos, where it widened out into grey pasture-land, the Cuckoo river grew deep enough to float up vessels of small tonnage from the coast when the tide was high. Between the moors and the pastures the valley wound for fourteen miles or so between secular woods so steeply converging that for the most part no more room was left at the bottom of the V than the river itself filled. The fisherman beside it trampled on bog pimpernels, sundew, asphodels, or pushed between clumps of *Osmunda regalis* that overtopped him by a couple of feet. If he took to wading, there was much ado to stand against the current. Only here and there it spread itself into a still black pool, greased with eddies: and beside such a pool it was odds that he found a diminutive meadow, green and flat as a billiard-table and edged with clumps of fern. To think of Cuckoo Valley is to call up the smell of that fern as it wrapped the day's haul of peal and trout at the bottom of the creel.

The town of Tregarrick (which possessed a gaol, a workhouse, and a lunatic asylum, and called itself the centre of the county) stood three miles back from the lip of this happy valley, whither, on summer evenings, its burghers rambled to eat cream and junket by the banks of the river, and afterwards sit and watch the fish rise while the youngsters and maidens played hide-and-seek in the woods. But there came a day when the names of Watt and Stephenson waxed great in the land, and these slow citizens caught the prevalent frenzy for progress. They took it, however, in their own fashion. They never dreamed of connecting themselves with other towns and a larger world, but of aggrandisement by means of a railway that should run from Tregarrick to nowhere and bring the intervening wealth to their doors. They planned a railway that should join Tregarrick with Cuckoo Valley and there divide into two branches, the one bringing ore and clay from the moors, the other fetching up sand and coal from the sea. Surveyors and engineers descended upon the woods: then a cloud of navvies. The days were filled with the crash of falling timber and the rush of emptied trucks. The stream was polluted, the fish died, the fairies were evicted from their rings beneath the oak, the morals of the junketing houses underwent change. The vale knew itself no longer: its smoke went up, week by week, with the noise of pick-axes and oaths.

On August 13th, 1834, it was opened by the Mayor of Tregarrick, and a locomotive was run along its rails to Dunford Bridge at the foot of the moors. The engine was christened "The Wonder of the Age," and I have before me a handbill of the festivities of that great day, which tells me that the Mayor himself was carried along the line in an open truck "embellished with Union Jacks, Lions and Unicorns, and other loyal devices." And then Nature settled slowly down to heal her wounds, and the new railway to pay no dividend to its promoters.

It is now two years and more since, one August day, I wound up my line by Dunford Bridge and sauntered towards the "Light Horseman" Inn, two gunshots up the road. It was four o'clock, or thereabouts, and a young couple sat on a bench by the inn-door, drinking cocoa out of one cup. The man (aged about one-and-twenty) wore the uncomfortable Sunday-best of a mechanic, with a shrivelled but still enormous bunch of Sweet William in his buttonhole. The girl was dressed in a bright green gown and a white bonnet. Both were flushed and perspiring, and I still think they must have ordered hot cocoa in haste and were repenting it at leisure. They lifted their eyes and blushed with a yet warmer red as I passed into the porch.

Two men were seated in the cool inn-parlour, each with a pasty and mug of beer. They were very old, and their faces caked with a composition of sweat and coal-dust. So deftly had it smoothed all distinction out of their features that it seemed natural and proper at the moment to take them for twins. Perhaps this was a mistake: perhaps, too, their appearance of extreme age was produced by the uniform dark-grey dust that overlaid so much of them as showed above the table. As twins, however, I remember them, and cannot shake off the impression that they had remained twins for an unusual number of years.

One addressed me. "Parties outside pretty comfortable?" he asked.

"They were drinking out of the same cup," I answered.

"Made man and wife this mornin'. Lord knows, I wouldn' hurry their soft looks and dilly-dallyin'; but did 'ee notice how much beverage was left in the cup?"

"They was mated at Tregarrick, half-after-nine this mornin'," observed the other twin, pulling out a great watch, "and we brought 'em down here in a truck for their honeymoon. The agreement was for an afternoon in the woods; but, by Crum! sir, they've sat there and held one another's hand for pretty well an hour after the stated time. And we've not the heart to tell 'em so."

He walked across to the window and peered over the blind.

"There's a mort of grounds in the cocoa that's sold here," he went on, after a look, "and 'tisn't the sort that does the stomach good, neither. For their own sakes, I'll give the word to start, and chance their thankin' me when they learn what things be made of."

The other twin arose, shook the crumbs off his trousers, and stretched himself. I guessed now that this newly married pair had delayed traffic at the Dunford terminus of the Cuckoo Valley Railway for almost an hour and a half: and I determined to travel into Tregarrick by the same train.

So we strolled out of the inn towards the line, the lovers following, arm-in-arm, some fifty paces behind.

"How far is it to the station?" I inquired.

The twins stared at me.

Presently we turned down a lane scored with dry ruts, passed an oak plantation, and came on a clearing where the train stood ready. The line did not finish: it ended in a heap of sand. There were eight trucks, seven of them laden with granite, and an engine, with a prodigiously long funnel, bearing the name "The Wonder of the Age" in brass letters along its boiler.

"Now," said one of the twins, while the other raked up the furnace, "you can ride in the empty truck with the lovers, or on the engine along with us—which you like."

I preferred the engine. We climbed on board, gave a loud whistle, and jolted off. Far down, on our right, shone the river, between the trees, and these trees, encroaching on the track, almost joined their branches above us. Ahead, the moss that grew upon the sleepers gave the line the appearance of a green glade, and the grass grew tall to the very edge of the rails. It seemed that in a few more years Nature would cover this scar of 1834 and score the return match against man. Rails, engine, officials, were already no better than ghosts: youth and progress lay in the pushing trees, the salmon leaping against the dam below, the young man and maid sitting with clasped hands and amatory looks in the hindmost truck.

At the end of three miles or so we gave an alarming whistle, and slowed down a bit. The trees were thinner here, and I saw that a high-road came down the hill and cut across our track some fifty yards ahead. We prepared to cross it cautiously.

"Ho—o—oy! Stop!"

The brake was applied, and as we came to a standstill a party of men and women descended the hill towards us.

"'Tis Susan Warne's seventh goin' to be christen'd, by the look of it," said the engine-driver beside me; "an', by Crum! we've got the kimbly."

The procession advanced. In the midst walked a stout woman, carrying a baby in long clothes, and in front a man bearing in both hands a plate covered with a white cloth. He stepped up beside the train, and, almost before I could be astonished, a large yellow cake was thrust into my hands. Engine-driver and stoker were also presented with a cake a-piece, and then the newly married pair, who took and ate with some shyness and giggling.

"Is it a boy or a girl?" asked the stoker, with his mouth full.

"A boy," the man answered; "and I count it good luck that you men of modern ways should be the first we meet on our way to church. The child 'll be a go-ahead if there's truth in omens."

"You're right, naybour. We're the speediest men in this part of the universe, I d' believe. Here's luck to 'ee, Susan Warne!" he piped out, addressing one of the women; "an' if you want a name for your seventh, you may christen en after the engine here, the 'Wonder of the Age.'"

We waved our hats and jolted off again towards Tregarrick. At the end of the journey the railway officials declined to charge for the pleasure of my company. But after some dispute, they agreed to compromise by adjourning to the "Railway Inn," and drinking prosperity to Susan Warne's seventh.

Q.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"THE NOVELIST OF THE FUTURE."

SIR,—I have read with some interest two articles on "The Novel of the Future" in recent numbers of THE SPEAKER. May I say a word or two with regard to your author's attack upon the critics? There are certain circumstances which might, I think, be pleaded in favour of the reviewer of fiction.

One part of our duty, in reviewing a novel, is towards the public. The average novel reader puts two questions to the reviewer: "What is this book about? Do you think I shall like it?" They seem to be fair and rational questions. In answering them—that is, in writing our review—we have to remember what manner of person the average novel reader is. Now it is well known that the average novel reader takes his humour from Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, his philosophy from Miss Edna Lyall, his ideal of womanhood from Mr. Besant and Mr. Black, and his ideal of manhood from stories of adventure. When, therefore, he asks us, "Do you think I shall like this book?" we must sometimes say yes, that the book will be pleasant reading to him, when as an artistic performance we should not say that it was admirable. It must be remembered that this kind cannot be educated in a hurry, nor only by abuse, nor in the columns of a review alone. Our power of improving the popular taste is often limited to a few hints, but that is not entirely our fault.

With regard to the system of reviewing which your author advocates, I can only point out that if that system were to be followed in every case, a reviewer would require a miraculous memory and the British Museum always at hand as a reference library; in the case of really important novels, it seems to be the system which is the more often followed, though not, perhaps, with that perfection which "The Novelist of the Future" will require.—I am, Sir, faithfully yours, A REVIEWER.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,
Friday, March 6th, 1891.

IN the current number of *Longman's Magazine*, Mr. Andrew Lang, *à propos* of the "Life of Lord Houghton," chats delightfully regarding the "trade" of the biographer. (The writing of biographies is, I suppose, more of a trade than the writing of criticisms, novels, or society verse.) Some things he has to say are of special interest to anyone who has himself written a biography, and they may even be discussed with advantage from the point of view of that formidable person the general reader.

The "tyranny of two volumes" weighs heavily upon Mr. Lang's soul, as it has weighed upon that of many a fellow-craftsman. Why men should think it necessary that a life, if it is to be written at all, should fill "two handsome octavo volumes," seems to Mr. Lang passing strange—and is strange from any point of view but that of the publisher. Nevertheless, when Mr. Lang tells us that but for the need of filling the two volumes a biographer would never include in his book such "uncharacteristic trivialities" as the little familiar messages which pass between friends or relatives on everyday matters—the weather, the state of the writer's health, and so forth—he seems to me to fall into deadly error. For are not all lives mainly made up of what seem to the eye of the onlooker trifles, and would a biography have any claim to rank as a work of art if it took no notice of "the trivial round, the common task" which form the background of every human existence? It is all very well to write the life of your Cæsar or Alexander without mentioning anything but his battles and his great acts of statecraft. That, however, is to write a history, not a biography. If you are to be made to know the man in whose life you are interested, you must not see him only in full dress; the course of his everyday life, dull and commonplace though it may be, must at least be

indicated, or how shall you get your portrait into its proper perspective, how create a background against which the notable deeds of a lifetime can be made to stand out in their true proportions?

In writing the opening pages of Lord Houghton's "Life"—which, in accordance with well-established practice, were not written till the rest of the book was finished—I said that "the heart of the biographer knows its own bitterness," and the phrase seems to have struck Mr. Lang. Like every other man who has written a biography, he must know something of that bitterness. He cannot know more of it than I do; for seldom has a more difficult task been committed to any man than the writing of such a life as that of Monckton Milnes. What was he? First and foremost he was a wit, a brilliant talker, and the friend of wits and talkers. The perfect biography of such a man would have reproduced, for the benefit of future generations, the breakfasts in Pall Mall and the long evenings at Fryston, and the reader would have felt himself one of the party who chatted and made merry in the company of Charles Buller, Carlyle, Thackeray, Tennyson, Venables, and the host himself. But alas! where was the record of these conversations to be found? Of the brilliant company hardly one survived, and nowhere had there been preserved a permanent memorial of the "good talk" which had so often been echoed by the walls of Fryston.

When Mrs. Gaskell, having undertaken to write the Memoir of Charlotte Brontë, complained to old Brontë that she did not find sufficient incident in his daughter's life to fill the conventional two volumes, he replied, "Then, madam, you must invent something." Would it have done to invent these bygone conversations at the table of Milnes, whereof no man living possesses the record? Possibly, if the biographer had been a Walter Savage Landor; but not otherwise. For Houghton, as for the overwhelming majority of men whose lives have been thought worth writing, there was no more a possible Landor than there was an actual Boswell.

What, in such a case, remains for the average biographer, who has to tell the story of a long life in such a way as to make the narrative clear and connected, and to paint a portrait that shall have life and reality without being a caricature? Boxes upon boxes of letters, trivial or otherwise, ranging from the schoolboy's scrawl to his mother to the note, penned with shaking hand, by the man on whom the finger of Death has already been laid; letters to him from a thousand friends and acquaintances, great and small; a few letters *about* him from the hands of kinsmen and kinswomen; volumes of newspaper cuttings, so familiar to the eye and so heavy to the heart of the biographer; speeches, pamphlets, magazine articles, and here and there, in some book of contemporary memoirs, a passing reference to him—in most cases inaccurate. The mass of material is enormous—overwhelming; as Mr. Lang says, "it is like a mountain of quartz." In the case of Lord Houghton, there is literally a roomful of these documents; the very floor is covered with them, and overflowing cabinets on every side contain the letters which were the accumulation of a long life.

It is from such materials that nearly all biographies are written now-a-days. Time was when most eminent men kept diaries; but they are too busy in these times to do this. Of course where a diary does exist the writer of the story finds himself at once in smooth water. He has a chart of his route, and knows exactly how he ought to steer to attain the much-desired haven of the last page. But where there is no diary, nothing but this mountain of heterogeneous material, most of it irrelevant, scattered on a score of thousand sheets of paper, how is the life to be written with fulness, vividness, and accuracy? That is the problem which the biographer has to solve, and only he who has attempted the task knows aught of its difficulty.

It is like putting together the pieces of the most intricate Chinese puzzle; but with this difference: that whereas one may reasonably assume that, given sufficient patience and ingenuity, a puzzle *can* be made to fit, in constructing the fabric of a life out of these hopelessly scattered and discordant pieces of material there is no such assurance. At any moment the biographer may come upon a "fault" in the seam which may falsify all his calculations, and destroy the labours of months. In Lord Houghton's life there was a period of a whole year during which no trace of a letter of his could be discovered, nor any light thrown upon his movements; and I have known still worse breaks in the chain of a biography than this. These are the things which make the biographer's head grow grey before its time. And even where one happily escapes disaster, who but the man whose task it has been to crush the mountain of quartz and extract therefrom the grains of gold, can know anything of the labour involved, of the long weary days often devoted to the verification of a single fact or date, of the slow, mole-like progress of the workman, burrowing through the mountain of material, progress so slow that even to his skilled eye it is almost imperceptible?

Mr. Lang tells us of another misery which gives bitterness to the heart of the biographer—of the plums which would add so much to the richness of the pudding, but which must be left out of it to avoid offence to living persons. But there is a greater trial—that of determining what plums can and what cannot be offered to the reader. It is an easy matter to leave out all those stories which are obviously "unfit for present publication." It is much more difficult to avoid the insertion of matter which, though harmless enough in appearance, has some deadly venom lurking unseen within it. Let the biographer try his best, and yet shall he not succeed in steering quite clear of this difficulty. My own correspondence at this present moment bears mournful testimony to the truth of what I say.

But it is not all bitterness. Let one suppose that the biographer knew the man of whom he has to write—and without personal knowledge of this kind the "Life" is but as a portrait painted from a photograph of the original—that he admired him or loved him, and that he has a real enthusiasm for his subject, and then in his very labour he will find his joy. It is his purpose to make a living picture of his friend; to let the outer world know what manner of man he really was—not on the stage of public life alone, but behind the scenes, in the sweet familiarity of domestic life, in his hours of sorest trial or brightest triumph—and whilst nothing which adds to the living image he strives to bring before his reader's eye can be too trivial to be mentioned, he must be on his guard against using material, no matter how good in itself, which has not this effect. Then, having resolutely subordinated not only his materials, but his own fancies and opinions, to the chief object of his work, and having above all rigorously refrained from obtruding himself between his subject and his readers, if by a happy chance he should succeed in making a picture of the man which shall commend itself to the world as a real portrait, one in which the defects of the original are not hidden, nor his virtues painted with glaring excess of colour, but which those who knew and loved him shall recognise as honest and complete, let the biographer be content,

and forget the days of weariness and travail when, out of the jumbled mass of confused and incoherent facts which often threatened to overwhelm him, he was striving to fashion the image of his friend.

T. W. R.

REVIEWS.

SPENCER WALPOLE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

A History of England from the Conclusion of the Great War in 1815. By Spencer Walpole, Author of the "Life of Lord John Russell." A new and revised edition. London: Longmans. 1890.

It has become almost a truism to say that of all kinds of history, that in which it is hardest to excel is the history of the times immediately preceding our own. There are several reasons for this. One is, that where the events to be described lie some way back, the mere lapse of time has already, to a large extent, selected certain persons and facts as matters of permanent interest, and relegated others to an oblivion which need not be disturbed. There are hundreds of people who were living in the seventeenth century, thousands of incidents that happened then, about whom and which elucidative details could be ascertained and set forth, were it worth while to do so. They have, however, ceased to be of consequence to us; and he who writes of those times may safely neglect them in his pages, even though a knowledge of them may be serviceable to his own mind. But it is still almost too soon to say which of the events of George IV.'s and William IV.'s time best deserve to be studied and recorded, because there are many of them whose significance has still to be determined by other events that have not yet happened. A thoughtful historian will, of course, form and act upon his own opinion; but he has not the same chance of being right which he would have were he dealing with the annals of remoter times. Another and even more obvious reason is to be found in the increasing difficulty of maintaining an impartial attitude which the historian feels the nearer he approaches his own times. If he be, as he ought to be, a man of warm sympathies, he is probably attached to one or other of the contemporary parties in his own country, and therefore disposed to take sides in the controversies which have given those parties their present character. Even if, being forewarned of this danger, he in fact escapes it, he is likely to be suspected of having yielded to it; and his opinions command a less ready assent than they would have done when expressed regarding men and struggles belonging to a dead past. These are disadvantages which have always surrounded the writer who has had to deal with times comparatively recent. Another and more serious one, which belongs specially to our own age and country, is to be found in the appalling growth of the data available for history. Parliamentary debates, pamphlets, books of memoirs, above all newspapers, have accumulated so vast a stock of materials that the historian may well despair of making any substantial impression upon it. He cannot possibly exhaust this stock even so far as it bears upon some one branch or department of history—say the history of military campaigns or of parliamentary legislation. He is therefore obliged either to rely on compilations made by his predecessors from their less ample materials, or to dip almost at haphazard here and there into the great ocean of printed matter which lies around him, swelling higher and higher as fresh documents see the light.

Mr. Spencer Walpole, a new edition of whose history of England from 1815 to the end of the Crimean War has just been published, has grappled manfully with these difficulties. As respects impartiality he has been completely successful. Though he has opinions, and does not conceal them, he expresses them with moderation, and with a due appreciation of the views opposed to his own. We find in him no disposition to write down or write up the leading political figures of the last generation. He frequently speaks severely of Lord Palmerston's behaviour as a Minister, and has probably done enough to prevent any revivification of that Palmerston worship which was so popular some twenty years ago, when praise of Mr. Gladstone's predecessor furnished a convenient means of disparaging Mr. Gladstone. But he does justice to some of Palmerston's unquestionable merits. Though he has been himself the biographer of Lord John Russell, he does not seek to palliate his errors. We recollect few writers who inspire more confidence in their good faith and honesty of purpose. So, too, in the handling of his materials Mr. Walpole displays commendable industry. He has evidently perused with care most of the official documents, memoirs, and authoritative collections of letters from which information on the main issues of the period he deals with may be gathered. He appreciates the vast sweep and compass of his subject, and devotes as much space to describing the progress of industry and commerce, and the changes in the social and material condition of the masses, as he does to the more purely political parts of his subject. If he does not show what may be called the Tintorettesque power of placing under the eye a multitude of groups upon the same canvas, as all actors together in the same great drama, he is himself conscious of the way in which every part of the action of the piece affects all the other parts. He does not fail to point out the connection of the domestic conflicts of English politics with the revolutions and insurrections in the Continental States of Europe and with the wars waged by Britain in India. Perfect accuracy cannot be expected in a book covering so wide a field; nor does Mr. Walpole's fall below the standard which reviewers may fairly apply. There are, however, occasional slips which might have been noticed and corrected when the book was passing into a new edition. For instance, "Viva il re assoluto," quoted at one place as the cry of a Spanish, at another of a Portuguese crowd, is neither Spanish nor Portuguese, but Italian. To say, *à propos* of the battle of Navarino, that "the Lacedæmonians were furious at the unusual spectacle of an Athenian garrison entrenched in the *Morea*" is an odd phrase to use of the year 425 B.C. The Indus does not flow anywhere near the city of Cabul, and Quetta is not "at the Northern entrance of the Bolan Pass," but a considerable distance therefrom. Sir Charles Napier did not, as seems implied in a remark regarding his "return from Waterloo," fight in the great battle, for though he started to join the Duke's army there, the campaign was over before he arrived. It is scarcely correct to describe the range of Taurus as "separating Asia Minor from Syria," nor, in mentioning the causes which alienated the Belgians from the Dutch, to treat the former as if they were a French-speaking instead of being, in many of the provinces, a Flemish-speaking people. We refer to these points, taken at random from Mr. Walpole's volumes, and some of them in themselves trivial inaccuracies, just because we regard his history as having now attained the position of a standard work, and therefore desire to see it correct in all its details. As respects style, it is clear and agreeable, less enlivened by anecdote than are Mr. Lecky's pages, but presenting its narrative of events in a more clear and consecutive form. Take it all in all, it is the best general account of the period in which England passed from an oligarchy qualified by the influence of a monarch into a plutocracy qualified by the fear of the masses.

He who follows the fortunes of English politics from 1815 to 1857 must be struck by the immense distance which we have travelled from those times. Although there are men still living and active in the contests of to-day who can remember the reign of George IV., and were themselves prominent in the reign of William IV., the whole political landscape seems utterly different from that which those

Sovereigns surveyed. Only two of the questions that were then troublesome still remain unsolved. The Turk is still a standing difficulty of our foreign policy, though his defenders are now few indeed compared with those who limited the area of the new Greek kingdom, and who insisted on rescuing Sultan Mahmud from the attacks of Mehemet Ali. The discontent and miseries of Ireland excite even hotter passions and prove more dangerous to strong Ministries now than they did in the days of O'Connell. But even these two problems are approached, at least by most of us, in a new spirit: and nearly all our other problems (other than the eternal one of bettering the condition of the toiler without removing the natural incentives to industry) are virtually new. The power of the Crown, which was still great in 1834, has now dwindled to insignificance. Such exercise of its prerogatives, even in foreign policy, as Prince Albert and Stockmar prompted, would no longer be possible, and no one cares to suggest the imposition of restraints. Meantime the question of tolerating the House of Lords has risen into prominence. The irresponsibility of the House of Commons came to an end when the record and publication of members' votes in divisions was ordered in 1836, and responsibility seems tending to become servility. Nobody now praises—hardly anyone even mentions—those middle classes, in whom the stability and common sense of the country were supposed, so late as 1860, to reside. Insurrections, and even moderate riots and seditions, familiar phenomena before 1846, have passed quite out of practical politics; everyone assumes that if the mass of the people want anything, they will get it by the exercise of their votes, without the necessity of "rising in their millions."

Not only have the old economic doctrines gone out of fashion, but the notion of economy in the popular or Joseph Hume sense—the duty of retrenchment and of a parsimonious national expenditure—has ceased to be a popular cry. England is but faintly interested in any questions of Continental politics. Such attention as she condescends to give to matters beyond her own coasts is given to India and the colonies, including, of course, the sea-road to the Far East. Bishops have ceased to be targets for Radical invective or newspaper ridicule, and Established Churches endeavour to recommend themselves by their devotion to the poor. Everybody may say what he pleases about religion, and, except in remote country districts, may attend or stay away from church without attracting remark. Puritanism has nearly disappeared, and amusement has become recognised as a duty, or at least as near to a duty as a generation which dislikes that word will suffer anything to be. There is far less distress and misery among the poor, but a far more pervading sympathy with such distress as does exist; a more general desire to do something by legislation, and yet far less respect for the legislative machinery which we have been accustomed to use. The old veneration for the British Constitution has vanished, yet Republicanism makes no progress. The England of to-day is not in the least such an England as the men who figured in Mr. Walpole's pages used to predict—it is not such as Croker feared, or as Macaulay hoped for.

We must not forget to note among the merits of Mr. Walpole's manner that he tells his story in the plain and simple way which enables us to perceive these contrasts for ourselves. He does not obtrude reflections, and shuns rhetorical embellishments.

THE CAMBRIDGE SHAKESPEARE.

The Works of William Shakespeare. Edited by William Aldis Wright. Vol. I. London: Macmillan & Co. 1891.

This is the first volume of a reprint of the Cambridge Shakespeare, the publication of which was first begun in 1863. It has long been out of print, and is now edited by Mr. Aldis Wright alone, but by him reverently on the original lines, so that it is substantially the same book with only such divergences and additions as all scholars will approve. We notice one curious conflict of fact or opinion between the publishers and printers on the one hand, and the editor on the other, in the outset of the book. On the back of the title-page we read "The First Edition of this volume of the Cambridge Shakespeare was published in 1863. Second Edition, 1867. Third Edition, 1891." On page xlv. we find "Preface to the Second Edition," with the date "March, 1887." Thus Mr. Aldis Wright calls second edition what Messrs. Macmillan call third edition. And no doubt the editor is correct; the so-called "second edition" was merely a publisher's reprint, with no valid claim to a more ambitious title. Until the number of each printing be specified with each issue of a book, such announcements—the despair of bibliographers—will continue to be made. But we should not have expected from the present publishers such a *naïve* piece of carelessness.

The aim of the editors originally was to make the best possible text from a comparison of all the authorities; but "where the Folios are all obviously wrong, and the Quartos also fail us," to "introduce into the text conjectural emendations," and then to give in the notes every, or nearly every, variant reading. This is the true way to edit any classical text, and it places the student on an equality with his teacher in all but learning, the facts are before him; he differs, if he do so, at his own peril and on his own responsibility. At the end of each play were "a few notes (*a*) to explain such variations in the text of former editions as could not be intelligibly expressed in the limits of a foot-note, (*b*) to justify any deviation from our ordinary rule in the text or foot-notes, and (*c*) to illustrate some passage of unusual difficulty or interest." The present editor has rigidly confined himself within the same rules, though, as he truly says: "So much has been done for the textual criticism of Shakespeare in the more than twenty years which have passed since this work was completed, that the additions to the notes are very numerous."

The result is an admirable student's book, free from the mass of notes which encumber Delius's German edition, but containing all that is necessary to the intelligent understanding of the text of the poet. For the history of the plays and of their origins, for essays on the grammar, metre, spelling, etc., we must go, and are rightly sent, elsewhere. It is impossible to bind up an illustrative Elizabethan library in the same volume with Shakespeare's works, and nothing else would give us all we want for their elucidation. All that ought to be here is here, selected by ripe scholarship, set forth in admirable print and style. It is a book to have at hand, and often to take down from the shelves. For reading, as delight, and apart from study, we shall all still continue to use one of the many editions in small and handy volumes.

DRAKE.

Sir Francis Drake. By Julian Corbett. (Men of Action Series. London: Macmillan & Co. 1890.

It is nearly four years since Mr. Corbett, in his spirited romance "For God and Gold," showed how deeply he was impressed by the character and exploits of Sir Francis Drake. Since then he has been wandering in other ages and other climes; but now, returning to his first loves, he has endeavoured to describe them in all seriousness and truth. That he has quite succeeded in doing so we are scarcely prepared to assert. He seems to have identified the Frank of his romance with the Francis of history, and it is not always easy to tell where the romance ends and the history begins—which of his statements are literal presentment of fact, and which are the products of imagination or are deeply coloured by it.

This eking out of fact with imagination is, however, not altogether new to the "Men of Action Series"; and it may be that, in the opinion of the readers for whom it is intended, the portraiture gains in vividness of colour what it loses in sharpness or delicacy of outline. There is no question that the book is interesting and readable, and that, putting aside the sometimes tawdry embellishments, the main narrative is sufficiently trustworthy. For in truth, what novelist or romancer, from Mr. Corbett to the shade of Alexandre Dumas, could conceive a tale more improbable, more wildly romantic, more captivating than the actualities of Drake's career? Compared with the true storming of Nombre de Dios, the sack of Venta Cruz, the transformation of the *Cacafuego* into the *Cacaplata*, or "the singeing of the King of Spain's beard," the most exaggerated conceptions of fiction are flat, stale, and unprofitable. There is no temptation to exaggerate, and it is barely possible to do so, though spite and malice can always manage to distort and misrepresent. In the case of Drake, there is, happily, not much room even for this; but we must refer to the curiously false version of Doughty's crime which Mr. Corbett has introduced. It is a romance by no means pure, and far from simple; a wicked romance; a romance with a purpose, though we cannot say what that purpose is, nor yet who is the author of it. We do not for a moment suppose Mr. Corbett himself guilty of inventing it; but we cannot acquit him of very grave indiscretion in lightly accepting it, and repeating it in the circumstantial manner in which it is now presented. To Drake's reputation, indeed, it does no harm. So far as Drake is concerned, it is of little consequence whether Doughty planned his crime months beforehand, or only days; he was a scoundrel and a traitor, and was most righteously put to death. But there are other reputations as dear to England as Drake's, and Mr. Corbett does not seem to have realised that his story aims a deadly blow at the good fame of Lord Burghley. We do not believe a word of it; and if Mr. Corbett will point the original slanderer out to us, the exhibiting him in his naked deformity will be for us a labour of love.

In matters of more exclusively personal and biographical interest, we are not sure that Mr. Corbett is always so accurate as he seems to think himself. His account of Drake's father, his description of Drake's home life, was perfectly allowable in "For God and Gold," but ought not to be put forward categorically in a serious book as an undoubted, well-established fact, for, in truth, it is nothing of the sort. The statements of Stow and Camden are not consistent in themselves, are at variance with each other, and are contradicted by equal or even higher authority; so that, though Mr. Corbett wanders through the labyrinth with a firm foot and unwavering confidence, it does not follow that he knows the way out of it a bit better than his predecessors. All this, however, is not saying that he has not written a very pleasant, interesting, and picturesque account of one of the grandest and most remarkable of our English Men of Action.

THE ENGLISHMAN ABROAD.

WAYFARING IN FRANCE. By Edward Harrison Barker. London: Richard Bentley. 1890.

DECIDEDLY the traveller, like the poet, is born, not made. Mr. Barker's title has a delicious sound to other wayfarers, whether of France or of England, but it is not unjust to him to say that the only page of his that can charm the memory is the title-page. To avoid discharging one's debts to travellers is a base piece of ingratitude that has been accorded to the tribe since the days of Mendez Pinto; and we therefore add at once that, while most modern travellers are both scientific and dull, Mr. Barker is neither the one nor the other. He has tramped honestly in many districts of France, he has set down the record of his days with no mean amount of literary skill, he has given us a very fair description of the peoples he studied—Bretons, Alsacians, Languedocians, and Landais—yet, none the less, he is very unsatisfactory. Your true traveller, metaphorically speaking, travels with canvas and colours. Mr. Barker travels with a pocket camera, and his results, instead of being heightened, altered, coloured up to the truth, are simply the facts that satisfy an average pair of eyes, facts that can be picked up by the hundred along the road, facts that are as common as flints, and perhaps as serviceable. Thus, when our author is relating how he trembled on the verge of a certain marine chasm, he repeats his guide's information that it had been traversed also by the Divine Sarah. Oh, *Daily Telegraph!* sighs the weary reader, why should thy paragraphs rise at one from the wine-coloured sea of Homer? Though the remote villages of rural Oxfordshire be swayed by the counsels of *Reynolds's Weekly Newspaper*, must the fair land of France be ravaged by travellers in cognac? If these facts are so, then, in the name of Borrow, let them be concealed. We have taken Borrow's name, and not in vain. *He* never fobbed off the hungry reader with plain prose, *his* meals never rose, as undigested ghosts, through his wayfaring pages. True, he sang the glory of good old ale, but it was the song of a poet refreshed in spirit as in body; true, he tells us how he drank brandy and water after a walk of sixty miles in Wales, but what a walk it was! Now, Mr. Barker's meals through France are as indelibly stamped on his memory as are the British tourist's meals in a foreign land on the British tourist's mind. Soup, ham, capsicums, fowl, figs, at Salles; leg of mutton, cheese, and honey at the *hospice* on the top of the Col du Lantaret, etc. etc., are not these recorded with fidelity in the pages of "Wayfaring in France"? We do not blame our author for *thinking* so much of his food on the journey—it is impossible for it not to play too important a part, as all trampers know—but he never should have *written* of it. He has blackened his name as a traveller for ever in our eyes by putting down that he refused to eat chestnuts offered him at a roadside inn. Now, what he *did* on that occasion does not matter to posterity, but a man of ideas, a man with any reverence for the rights of literature, would have *drawn* an idyllic picture of the weary traveller seated beside the blaze of the hostelry's wood fire, with a brown earthenware porringer of steaming chestnuts on his knees. But what is written? A gross paragraph on hours of waiting for a dinner without chestnuts, a matter of fowl, or duck, or soup, or ham, we forget which. The indecorum of it, from a literary point of view, is so palpable that the point needs no pursuing. It is vain, perhaps, to hope that our words can pierce the conscience of a man who has done this thing, but the good seed may chance to fall on fruitful ground. To the young of this land about to travel, we would say, remember, you can always trust your countrymen to import with them into foreign countries a sufficient quantity of matter-of-factness and Saxon sense, just as you can trust the light-hearted excursionist of Merry England to throw beer-bottles under immemorial elms. For your own sake, if you publish your travels, and also for the sake of your reader, try and get rid of those national characteristics which have secured for us temporary supremacy over a fourth of the earth, and the eternal ill-will of the Graces and the Muses. Let the spirit of the poetical lands you pass through overcome for a little while the spirit of the pushing and commercial race which, after a while, must surely pass away. Mr. Barker, to do him justice again, is richer in poetical traits than many travellers we have read. He affirms that an unpruned bramble is a thousand times more beautiful than a vine lopped and tied back to its stake, and for these blessed words is his forehead whitened in our eyes.

FICTION IN THREE SIZES.

1. A Bolt from the Blue. By Scott Graham. Three vols. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington. 1891.
2. He Fell among Thieves. By D. Christie Murray and Henry Herman. Two vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1891.
3. Fair Castaways: a Romance of War and Storm. By F. H. Winder. One vol. London: Eden, Remington & Co. 1891.

"A Bolt from the Blue" is a long story. It occupies over nine hundred pages, and we should imagine that there are very few writers who could fill nine hundred pages without occasionally chancing to say a good thing. At any rate, the author of "A Bolt from the Blue" is not among their number. Mr. Scott Graham sometimes wakes, just as the good Homer sometimes nods. But on the whole his last work seems to us to be full of inconsistencies and improbabilities; it is wanting both in brightness and in force; and we could waste our space by quoting many sentences which can only have been the unfortunate result of careless writing. On the other hand, the principal character in the book is not badly drawn. His reclamation and final reconciliation with his wife are described well, and secure to some extent the sympathies of the reader. With the author's belief that virtue should be the same thing for the man that it is for the woman, we on the whole agree. In short, we rather like the author's opinions—with which, by the way, a review has very little business to be concerned—but we are not able to admire him greatly as a novelist.

We have no intention of telling the author's story; but we should like to call attention to one or two points. The hero, Le Breton, is undoubtedly a villain in the first volume, and something better in the third. There is no inconsistency in this. And without doubt the body changes as well as the mind, but not every change is probable. On the fourteenth page of his story, the author in describing his hero tells us that "the brown hair which curled so gracefully towards the neck was getting thin on the temples;" while, at a later period of his history, mention is made of "those sunny boyish curls clustering about his open forehead." There are two explanations possible: one is a mere quibble, and the other—that the man wore a reversible wig—seems to us but poorly suited to the dignity of a hero. But this is a minor point. It is in the marriage of Mona Fairfax with Le Breton, in the miraculous manner in which she and her uncle fail to know anything whatever about a man against whom they have been warned, and in the coincidences which are scattered so profusely through the remaining two volumes, that we feel our author is asking too much of the patience of his reader. If we may judge from the few critical remarks which we find in these pages, Mr. Scott Graham is well able to discover in others some faults which he has failed to correct in himself.

Rather less than a year ago, in noticing "The Bishop's Bible," by Mr. Murray and Mr. Herman, we had occasion to point out that it rarely rose above the height of a popular melodrama; although in that novel, as in some melodramas, there were many attractive points. We have come to almost the same conclusion on reading "He Fell Among Thieves," by the same authors, the last chapters of which appear in *Macmillan's Magazine* for the present month. Mr. Herman and Mr. Murray have apparently decided not to attempt the best thing—not to try to make their work lasting and artistic. They are content with working the old vein. If they did this badly, if they were unable to construct a clever plot, or if their writing were habitually slipshod, we should be better contented with their choice. These things, however, are not so. The plot of "He Fell Among Thieves" is most ingenious; these authors have skill, *verve*, sense of humour, and considerable dramatic power; they are capable occasionally of varying their array of melodramatic dummies by introducing a new and impressive character. Few living authors are better able to make a bad conventionality seem tolerable. The poet looks to the stars, and does well; the good novelist, with gaze neither exalted nor depressed, looks among his fellow-men, and does well; Mr. Murray and Mr. Herman look neither higher nor lower than an Adelphi gallery, and from the commercial point of view we have no doubt that they are satisfactory. The title gives a fair idea of the subject of their new story. The hero is perhaps not quite innocent, but distinctly ignorant. As he was not aware that it was illegal for him to pawn certain diamonds for which he had not paid, we suppose that he was not acquainted with the novels of one greater than Mr. Murray and Mr. Herman. The demure delight which the authors seem to take in the villainy of their villains has a kind of wicked attraction about it.

"Fair Castaways" is a story of many incidents; of these some are improbable, some are impossible, and some, which are neither improbable nor impossible, are disgusting. The story has but very little claim to its title. Only the last sixty or so pages are concerned with fair castaways. The author has that knowledge of seamanship which might be expected in an intelligent passenger; of the practical knowledge which is required for the description of unusual and wonderful incidents such as he attempts, he has, apparently, very little, and consequently he makes mistakes. He is fond, very fond, of plugs. Grace Meredith took the plug out of a fresh-water boat, which contained the bad baronet. The boat sank. Subsequently the bad baronet thought of taking the plug out of a boat, but changed his mind, and sent it adrift instead. Then there is a brig, holding two sterling heroes, one conventional boatswain, and a mutinous crew, and in this case the stopper is blown out of one of the hawse-pipes by "that last mighty plunge," and has to be put back again by one sterling hero. It is hardly worth while to mention that the heroes go to look for hidden treasure. They may possibly stop doing so when the heroines stop wearing dresses of some soft, white, clinging material; but that time is not yet. For the present, reviewers have learned to expect either hidden treasure or hypnotism; and in some aggravated cases they get both.

THE MARCH MAGAZINES.

Of literary criticism there is always enough and to spare in the magazines. Mr. George Saintsbury, in *Macmillan's*, writes on the "Contrasts of English and French Literature." Mr. Saintsbury professes general heresy in the matter of theories. He can remember at Oxford, in his undergraduate days, that professional and tutorial chairs were mostly held by disciples of Mill, and everything was explained on the association of ideas theory. Mr. Darwin succeeded Mill, and now the scientific explanation of all things is by selection and heredity, derivation and crossing. These delusive generalisations are Delilahs of the imagination. It is much more profitable, instead of seeking for theories of the differences between the French and English genius as displayed in literature, to examine, compare, and contrast the differences. This study, with his unrivalled knowledge of both literatures, Mr. Saintsbury opens up successfully, and points his recommendation that others should pursue it for themselves with a joke. A right reverend friend of his once rendered *Ne sit ancillæ tibi amor pudori*, "Don't be ashamed of marrying the housemaid." On this pattern Mr. Saintsbury translates *candidus imperti*, "Tell us all about it and don't give yourself airs." In the *Fortnightly* Mr. Edward Delille's exclamatory essay on Paul Verlaine is a good deal better than the note on Rossetti by the author of "A Dead Man's Diary," but neither of them reaches the standard of excellence which, as a rule, marks the literary papers in this

magazine. There is a better study of Rossetti in *Temple Bar*, by Mr. W. M. Hardinge. He writes of the four Louvre sonnets, and although he tells us with affected *naïveté* that Mr. William Rossetti "has allowed me to hold in my own hands a precious copy of the *Germ*," he shows much critical insight. In the *National Review* Mr. H. D. Traill makes a rapid dash over the "thin ice" of morality in politics, literature, and the drama. It is clever; but the fact that he accuses others of suffering from "Gladstonitis," is a sure sign that he himself is in the throes of a bad attack of "Gladstonophobia." Mr. W. Sharp's paper in the same magazine on American literature shows a commendable acquaintance with the subject, but lacks point. Mr. C. J. Pickering, also in the *National*, writes in a scholarly manner of the Rubâ'iyât of Abû Sâ'id. This shaikh was a younger contemporary of Avicenna's, and is a kind of link between the physician-poet and Omar Khayam. Archdeacon Farrar, in a review of Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of the World" in *Longman's*, says he is no critic, and it is not easy to disagree with him. He thinks highly, however, of the work of his old schoolfellow. A writer in *Scribner*, *à propos* of the poems of Emily Dickinson, thrashes out once more the mangled straw of that notorious debating-society subject, whether form or significance, style or matter, is the more lasting. "It would be a good thing," Mr. Mark Twain says, "to read Mr. Kipling's stories for their style alone if there were no story back of it." This, says Mr. J. M. Barrie in the *Contemporary*, might be a good thing, if it were not impossible. One might as well say, "It would be a good thing to admire correct spelling though there were no word back of it." Style and matter are one, just as the letters that make a word are the word. Mr. Barrie's criticism is sympathetic but discriminating. He agrees with the general opinion that Mr. Kipling has revealed himself in Dick Heldar, the hero of "The Light that Failed." Dick Heldar was always half-blind to the best in life, just as Mr. Kipling is. He is under the curse of thinking he knows everything; it never dawns upon him that he is but a beginner in knowledge of life. At present he is a rare workman with a contempt for the best material; but he has latent capabilities which may develop, and "if he is as conscientious in the future as he has been in the past, and discovers that nothing lives in literature but what is ennobling, he may surprise us again." Mr. E. O. Von Lippmann, of Halle, has a note in the *New Review* giving a possible explanation of the supposed error in the *Winter's Tale*, the "coast of Bohemia"; Professor Freeman defends compulsory Greek against the outcry of the "ambitious pedagogues" in *Macmillan's*; and Miss Mary Grey has an interesting popular paper on Sappho in the *Argosy*.

The only two living English poets with whom, according to Archdeacon Farrar, Sir Edwin Arnold need fear comparison, are both represented in the magazines this month. Mr. Grove begs us to make no quotation from Lord Tennyson's song in the *New Review*, and we will not. We will quote from Shakespeare instead. "To die—to sleep," exclaims my lord Hamlet in the play. The latter of these two infinitives is the refrain of Lord Tennyson's song, and never has the Laureate used a refrain with greater effect. The other feature of the workmanship, and one in which Tennyson has often worked wonders, is the subtle and chromatic alliteration. This new song will rank among Tennyson's best lyrics.

Mr. Swinburne's four inscriptions for the pedestal of a statue of Marlowe, with the exception of the last line of the fourth, are not equal to his best work. After five lines of verbiage we have this:—

> "and he
> First gave our song a sound that matched our sea."

It comes very near to Ben Jonson's and Chapman's famous single lines on the same poet. Professor C. H. Herford's verse translation in the *Contemporary* of a scene from Ibsen's *Brand* is an admirable performance.

Of course the biographical subject of the month is John Wesley. Mr. R. Denny Urlin in the *Newbery House Magazine* writes in a somewhat guarded way of Wesley's life and work. Archdeacon Farrar in the *Contemporary* is more cordial; but his hesitating admission that "the impulse which John Wesley gave has not yet wholly spent its force" is in remarkable contrast to the endorsement by the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes in the *Nineteenth Century* of the German professor's declaration that "Methodism is on the point of becoming in Evangelical Christianity, practically, if also unknown to many, the ruling power, like Jesuitism in Catholic Christianity." The paper by Mr. Hughes is by far the most interesting of the three essays on Wesley. *Temple Bar*, which is deservedly noted for its biographical papers, gives in "Horace Walpole's Twin Wives" a very full account of Mary and Agnes Berry, the sprightly maiden ladies who had the remarkable fortune to be the friends in their youth of the aristocratic patron of letters of last century, and to be followed to the grave and mourned in elegiac verse by the Mæcenas of this. The article on Kinglake is brief, but interesting. The writer says that one of the few canons of Kinglake's creed was—at least, he averred it was—"a belief that if a Frenchman behaved well he would be rewarded by finding himself an Englishman in a future life." The extracts from the memoirs of Talleyrand in the *Century* are more interesting this month than they have been in the past. Talleyrand shows himself *more suo*, in the best light possible in the negotiations with Alexander of Russia, and in the matter of the divorce. Mr. H. J. Allen's life of Crispi, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, is the fullest account of the Italian statesman that has yet appeared in English. It is founded on a notice by Cherbuliez in his "Profils Étrangers." In the *New Review* Dr. Parker writes on "Mr. Gladstone Close at Hand." Mr. Gladstone allowed Dr. Parker to put him through a sort of written catechism, from which the Doctor has, with permission, made a number of quotations.

We have space only for the briefest references to the political, economic, and sociological matter which always forms the staple of the contents of the principal magazines, and to the miscellaneous literature to be found in them all. Mr. T. M. Healy, M.P., in the *New Review*, and Mr. J. J. Clancy, M.P., in the *Contemporary*, deal with the Irish leadership from opposite standpoints. The conditions and prospects of British commerce are discussed in the *National Review* in a somewhat alarmist manner by Mr. J. A. Hobson, who thinks that we are gradually teaching India to be the workshop of the world; and by the Earl of Dunraven, in the *Nineteenth Century*, who advocates a closer commercial union of the Colonies with the Empire. The labour problem is dealt with by Mr. George Howell, M.P., and Mr. H. W. Massingham, in the *New Review*. In the same magazine Sir T. H. Farrer opens a series of papers on a reformed London, with a criticism of the water-supply. The best short stories of the month are Thomas Hardy's "For Conscience' Sake" in the *Fortnightly*, "My Old Drawing-Master" in *Macmillan's*, "The Mugaddam of Spins" in *Blackwood's*, and the "Gift of Life" in *Longman's*. The first part of the "Pupil" in the last magazine is in Henry James's best manner. A very bright dramatic piece by Major Arthur Griffiths is "An Express Idyll" in *Murray's*. Mr. W. Hodgson's "Fair Ophelia of a Highland Glen" in the *Fortnightly* is a pathetic transcript from life. The Highland mad girl is, however, liker Sterne's Maria than Ophelia. Mrs. Fuller Maitland's soliloquy in *Temple Bar* is very amusing. "Biblical Drama in South Staffordshire," in *Cornhill*, is a description of a performance of Mr. Richard Jukes's "Joseph and his Brethren" by the miners of Gornal, which reads like a paper of Hazlitt's.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

Two months earlier than usual, "The Statesman's Year-Book" has made its appearance, and Mr. Scott-Keltie may fairly be congratulated, not merely for his promptitude, but for the skill and clearness with which he has arranged an ever-increasing mass of facts and statistics. A few years ago this well-known work of reference seemed to be gradually losing ground, but under its present editor it has taken a new lease of life. Mr. Keltie has brought the book thoroughly up to date, and the various political changes which took place last year in different parts of the globe are duly recorded. Heligoland, for instance, is no longer part of the British Empire; but by a treaty made last summer between England and Germany, Zanzibar has been placed under the protection of the English flag. With scarcely an exception the information which is given in these eleven hundred pages concerning the government, area, population, religion, education, justice, crime, pauperism, finance, commerce, shipping, and the like, of all the nations of the world, has been supplied from official, and therefore authoritative, sources. One of the most valuable features of the work consists of carefully selected lists of statistical and other books of reference relating to the internal affairs of each country. We are glad to observe that the page-headings of the book have been altered in such a manner that it is now comparatively easy to find without delay the facts recorded in any particular section of the work. This is the twenty-eighth annual publication of the "Statesman's Year-Book," and the labour and research which Mr. Keltie has brought to its compilation, not merely deserve recognition, but ought to win for such an admirable and, in its way, unique work of reference the prompt and practical appreciation of all students of contemporary history and politics.

Amongst the more hardy annuals in literature a place is certainly due to Mr. Edward Walford's convenient little volumes on the "Peerage," "Baronetage," "Knightage," and "House of Commons." This is the thirty-seventh yearly issue of these shilling volumes, and—like good wine—they get better with age. Mr. Walford has the peerage at his finger-ends, and has spent more time than most men would care to do in studying the kaleidoscopic changes which are constantly taking place in the ranks of the aristocracy. Though these little books are published at a popular price, and are of necessity concisely written, no one can justly charge the compiler with a lack of accuracy or care. The labour involved in the preparation of even unpretending manuals like these will be obvious to everyone when we add that Mr. Walford submits his statements as to facts and dates year by year to the correction of the families or persons who are naturally most interested in the accuracy of such works of reference.

Amongst compilers of useful works of reference Dr. Brewer long ago made for himself a unique reputation, and readers of all sorts and conditions in search of a short cut to knowledge unquestionably owe him a debt of gratitude. "The Historic Note Book" is the third and last volume of a series. In the "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable" Dr. Brewer briefly explained the meaning of words and expressions in which an allusion is made to some legend, custom, or character, which have faded more or less completely from the public recollection. The "Reader's Hand-Book" creditably fulfils a still more difficult task, by indicating, in a few lines, the plots of novels and plays, ballads and romances, and by giving biographical information concerning their authors. The present volume attempts for history what the first did for phraseology, and what the second did for poetry and fiction. It explains, clearly and briefly, historical terms and events, acts of parliament, treaties, and customs, and allusions to public affairs of frequent occurrence, which occur in books, speeches, and newspapers. Dr. Brewer has been a hewer of wood and drawer of water in literature for a period of sixty years, and apparently he never read a book in his life without a slip of paper and a pencil to jot down points of interest. The arrangement of the present work is rather different from that which usually prevails in historic manuals; for the information is not given under the ruling word, but generally under the first noun or adjective of the phrase, for example, under the word "Declaration," at least a score of famous statements are grouped. By this means it is possible at once to find all that the book has to say on a given subject. A useful and accurate compilation, in which the results of considerable historical research are briefly recorded with praiseworthy clearness and impartiality.

"The Plays of Sheridan"—or rather the more important of them—have just been added to the Camelot Series. The volume is edited by Mr. Rudolf Dircks, who contributes to its pages a sympathetic and fairly satisfactory sketch of a sympathetic but unsatisfactory man, who, in his time, as dramatist, orator, politician, and wit, played many parts. Sheridan has not inaptly been termed the Beaumarchais of the English stage, and though his career as a dramatist terminated before he was thirty, it was there that the chief laurels of his life were won. It is difficult to believe that he was only twenty-two when he wrote *The Rivals*, and but five-and-twenty when he placed his claims beyond all further question by the production of that sparkling and incomparable comedy of the manners of his age—*The School for Scandal*. If he sometimes borrowed with a free hand from the writings of his contemporaries, he generally transfigured the loan, though occasionally in these questionable transactions he fell far below the level of his own unaided work. His own career was more of a tragedy than a comedy, and all the world knows that Sheridan was his own worst enemy. He was shifty, vain, and reckless, and the folly of his life presented a bitter contrast to the wisdom of his lips. In spite of all his failings—and they were neither few nor slight—he retained to the last his power of fascination, and though he died a bankrupt, he was buried in Westminster Abbey with princes, dukes, and bishops in attendance.

It is probably true that upon no epoch of American history has so much been written from every conceivable point of view as upon the period which is handled by Mr. Thwaites in "The Colonies, 1492-1750." In spite, however, of many more ambitious books on the subject, it would be unfair to say that this is a superfluous volume. On the contrary, it is one of the best examples of the cheap historical manual which we have encountered. Mr. Thwaites is more than a mere annalist; for he not only sets down in their due relation and proportion a great array of salient facts, but likewise traces the growth of those ideas and institutions which have shaped so largely the present condition as well as the past history of the United States. It would be difficult to name a more just and scholarly brief description than is to be found in these three hundred pages of the English settlements in Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas, between the years 1606 and 1700. Another chapter of singular value gives a clear and honestly written account of the social and economic conditions which prevailed in New England at the dawn of the eighteenth century. Students are sure to appreciate the elaborate references to other sources of information. Mr. Thwaites provides a bibliography which gives first the more common and easily accessible works on the subject, then special volumes, monographs, contemporary narratives, historical maps, etc. There is an unusually full index to this volume, besides a clear and concise synopsis and four good maps.

Under the detestable title of "How 'No. 1' became '1½' in Norway," Mr. Maitland Stuart gives a lively though high-flown account of a recent visit to the land of pine trees and fiords in search for a cure for insomnia brought about by a conspiracy of heat, overwork, and worry. The element of romance is not absent from the narrative, and possibly we must look in this direction for an explanation of the sentimental strain in which the book is written. We have no intention of explaining the odd title, though our readers probably have already guessed that Mr. Maitland Stuart had good reason to congratulate himself on the direction in which he turned his steps. People who intend to try Norway in the approaching summer might glance with advantage through these pages. They will pick up a few shrewd hints and several amusing anecdotes, though they need not turn to the volume with the expectation of finding it to be either a conventional or an unconventional guide-book. The chief objection which we have to an otherwise agreeable record is the decorated English in which it is written.

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* The Statesman's Year-Book. A Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1891. Edited by J. Scott Keltie. London and New York: Macmillan & Co. Crown 8vo. (10s. 6d.)

The Shilling Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage, and House of Commons for 1891. Edited by Edward Walford, M.A., Author of "The Windsor Peerage." Four volumes. London: Chatto & Windus, Piccadilly. 18mo. (1s. each.)

The Historic Note-Book. With an Appendix of Battles. By the Rev. E. Cobham Brewer, LL.D. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 15, Waterloo Place. Crown 8vo.

The Plays of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Edited, with an introduction, by Rudolf Dircks. (The Camelot Series.) London and New York: Walter Scott. Crown 8vo. (1s.)

The Colonies, 1492—1750. By Reuben G. Thwaites. Secretary of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Maps. (Epochs of American History.) London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 12mo.

How "No. 1" became "1½" in Norway. By Maitland Stuart. London: Hutchinson & Co., 25, Paternoster Square. Crown 8vo.

NOTICE.

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Half-yearly...	14s.
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